Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2026

https://archive.org/details/blackwoodsmagazi0204vari

BLACKWOOD'S

MAGAZINE.

VOL. CCIV.

JULY—DECEMBER 1918.

WILLIAM BLACKWOOD & SONS, EDINBURGH;
AND
37 PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON

1918.

All Rights of Translation and Republication reserved.

CONTENTS.

PAGE

A Bombing Stunt, and Afterwards. By Ballast, . . 526

A Forgotten Capital of the Near East. By Lieut.-Commander H. C. Lukach, R.N.V.R., ... 582

A Hospital in France. By Skia, ... 613

A Mobile X-Ray Section on the Italian Front. By Helena Gleichen, ... 145

Among Mahommedans in the Punjab, ... 486

An Involuntary Visit: Three Days with the Turks in Mesopotamia. By P. C. S. H., ... 74

A Seventeenth-Century Pacifist. By Reginald L. Hine, . 358

Change of Air, ... 178

Escaped! Adventures in German Captivity. By Wallace Ellison, ... 110, 251, 281

Experiences of a War Baby. By One, . . . 815

Festival. By Zeres, ... 761

Five Months with the German Raider *Wolf*. By F. G. Trayes, 1

For Women. By A Woman, ... 697

Gott Mit Uns. An Impression of the Critical Days of March 1918. By the Right Hon. Sir John Simon, M.P., . 771

"Green Balls." By Paul Bewsher, ... 752

Hazlitt *v.* 'Blackwood's Magazine.' An Ancient Controversy. By Charles Whibley, ... 388

H.M.S. ——. By Klaxon, ... 235, 399

Ireland, ... 788

Musings without Method, . . 131, 266, 408, 539, 687, 832

"Not under Full Administrative Control." By M. H. M., . 494
On Patrol. By Klaxon, ... 45, 5[illegible]
On the Wall. By Zeres, ... 374
Pushed. By Quex, ... 421, 553
Salvage. By G. P. U., ... 495
S. G. By C. H. B., ... 229
Sir Walter Ralegh. By Charles Whibley, . . . 670
The Bench and Bar of England. By J. A. Strahan, 598, 731
The French Renaissance. By Charles Whibley, . . 100
The Man from the Clouds. By J. Storer Clouston, 47, 203, 323, 455
The Old Baghdad-Kermanshah Road. By Edmund Candler, . 307
The Return Push. By Quex, ... 794
The Test. By Oswald Wildridge, ... 641
The Unknown Colt. A Story of the Galway Plate. By Jas. R. Martin, ... 502
The War Office in War Time. By Major-General Sir C. E. Callwell, K.C.B., ... 775
The Water-Rats. By Zeres, ... 29
With the American Troop Convoy. By Rupert Stanley, . 354
"Usque ab Ovo." By "Bartimeus," 63

Index, ... 843

BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE.

No. MCCXXXIII. JULY 1918. Vol. CCIV.

FIVE MONTHS WITH THE GERMAN RAIDER *WOLF*.

BY F. G. TRAYES.

V.

Life on the *Wolf* was very different to life on the *Hitachi*. To begin with, all the single men of military age were accommodated on the 'tween decks, and slept in hammocks, which they had to sling themselves. The elder men slept in bunks taken from the *Hitachi*, but the quarters of all in the 'tween decks were very restricted; there was no privacy, no convenience, and only a screen divided the European and Japanese quarters. The condition of our fellow-countrymen from the *Hitachi* was the reverse of enviable, though it was a great deal better than that of the crews of captured ships, who were "accommodated" under the poop—where the captains and officers captured had quarters to themselves—and exercised on the poop and well-deck, the port side of which was reserved for the Japanese.

There were between three and four hundred prisoners on board, mostly British, some of whom had been captured in the February previous, as the *Wolf* had left Germany in November 1916, the *Hitachi* being the tenth prize caught. The condition in which these prisoners lived cannot be too strongly condemned. The heat in the Tropics was insufferable, the overcrowding abominable, and on the poop there was hardly room to move. But notwithstanding these hardships the men seemed to be merry and bright, and showed smiling faces to their captors. They had all evidently made up their minds to keep their end up to the last, and were not to be downed by any bad

news or bad treatment the Germans might give them. The *Wolf* of course picked up wireless news every day, printed it, and circulated it throughout the ship in German and English. We did not, however, hear all the news that was picked up, but felt that what we did hear kept us at least a little in touch with the outside world; and we have since been able to verify that, and also to discover that we missed a great deal too.

The accommodation provided for the married couples on the *Wolf* was situated on the port-side upper deck. The "cabins" had been improvised when the first women and civilian prisoners were captured, and other cabins had been carved out as the number of these prisoners increased. The cabins were of course small — there was very little room to spare on the *Wolf*—and, at the best, makeshift contrivances; but it must be admitted that our German captors did all they could to make us as comfortable as possible under the conditions prevailing. The married couples, the Australian military officers, and a few elderly civilians, messed together in the officers' ward-room, quite a tiny saloon, which was placed at our disposal after the officers had finished their meals. The food on the *Wolf* was better cooked than it had been on the *Hitachi*, but there was of course no fresh food of any kind. Even the potatoes were dried, and had to be soaked many hours before being cooked, nor did they much resemble the original article: the same remark applies to the other vegetables. Occasionally our meals satisfied us as far as quantity went, but in the main we left the table feeling that we could with ease have disposed of a great deal more. This was especially the case after breakfast, which consisted of bread and jam only. Each cabin had a German orderly to look after it and wait on the occupants, and a Japanese steward had two or three cabins to look after and clean.

The deck — we were only allowed the port side — was about six feet wide, and part of this was occupied by spare spars. Sailors and officers and prisoners, to fetch their food, were passing along this deck incessantly all day, so it can easily be imagined there was not much room for sitting about on deck-chairs. We were, however, allowed to go down to the well-deck to see our friends during the daytime. They had their meals in the 'tween decks at different times to us, but the food provided was usually just the same. The evenings were the deadliest hours of all on the *Wolf*. At dusk, the order "Schiff abblenden!" resounded all through the ship; sailors came round to put tin plates over all the portholes, and from thence onward throughout the night complete darkness prevailed on

deck, not a glint of light showing anywhere.

When the *Wolf* considered herself in dangerous waters, and when laying mines, even smoking was forbidden on deck. All the cabins had a device by which, directly the door was open, the light went out, only to be relit when the door closed. So it was impossible for any one to leave his cabin with the door open and the light on. There was nothing to do in the evenings after the last meal, which was over before eight o'clock. There was nowhere to sit, except on the dark deck or in the dark cabins, for it was so hot that the cabin doors had to be kept open; and the evenings spent on the *Wolf* were certainly very dreary. Most of us felt we would rather be in jail on shore, for then we should be in no risk of being killed at any moment by our own people, our cells would have been larger than our cabins, and our food possibly not much worse; and our jail would at least have been stationary and not rolling about, though, it must be confessed, the *Wolf* was a good sea boat.

She had been one of the Hansa Line before the war, was about 6000 tons, with a speed of about ten knots at the outside. She had been thoroughly adapted for her work as a raider: had four torpedo-tubes and six guns (said to be 4·7), not to mention machine and smaller guns, none of which could be seen by a passing ship, to which the *Wolf* looked, as she was intended to look, exactly like an innocent tramp. When in action her bulwarks dropped, giving free play to her guns and torpedoes. There was telephone communication between her bridge and every gun and every part of the ship; she carried a huge searchlight; her masts and funnel were telescopic, and she could rig an extra funnel. She carried large supplies of bombs, hand-grenades, rifles, and small arms, had hospitals with two doctors on board; among her crew of more than three hundred were representatives of every trade; she was thoroughly well equipped in every way; the officers had the best and most powerful binoculars, and absolutely nothing seemed to have been forgotten. There were, it was said, only three of the officers who were Imperial Navy men — the Commander, the artillery officer, and the lieutenant in charge of the prisoners. All the other officers and a great many of the crew were from the German mercantile marine, who had travelled with, mixed with, and lived with Englishmen in many parts of the world. To this fact we undoubtedly owed the kindly treatment we received on board — treatment which was infinitely better than we expected to receive. The majority of the officers and men were certainly kindly disposed towards us. There is no doubt, however, the fear that we might be taken by a British cruiser

also had something to do with this treatment; for if we had been treated badly the Germans knew they would have cause to regret it. We were forbidden to talk to the crew, but under cover of the darkness some, a great number of whom spoke English, were only too glad to speak to us. We learned from them that the *Wolf* had been out a year, that they were all very "fed up" with it, tired of the life, tired of the sea, tired of the food, longing to get home, and longing for the war to end. They had, too, no doubts as to how the war would end, and were certain that the *Wolf* would get back to Germany whenever she wished to do so.

They were certain three things would bring them victory — their submarines, the defection of Russia, who would soon be made to conclude peace with Germany, and the fact that in their opinion America had entered the war too late.

The interests of the *Wolf* were now to a certain extent identical with our own that we should not meet an Allied cruiser. A notice was posted in some of our cabins saying in that event the women with their husbands, and some other prisoners, would be put into boats with a white flag, "if weather and other conditions permitted." The other prisoners, however—viz., those under the poop and on the 'tween decks—would have had no chance of being saved. They would all have been battened down under hatches (this, indeed, was done whenever the *Wolf* sighted or captured a ship, and when gun and other drill was carried on), and armed guards supplied with hand-grenades sent among them. Their fate, if the *Wolf* had gone into action, would have been too terrible to contemplate, and it is certain very few of them could have been saved.

The *Wolf*, with a company of over 700 on board, sailed away on a south-westerly course for the next two days, and the usual routine of the ship went on, but no further drills took place. Soon after daybreak on Nov. 10, a sailor locked us all in our cabins, armed guards patrolled the deck, and a short time after an officer came to each cabin and informed us that there was a steamer on the starboard side which the *Wolf* intended to capture. He told us the *Wolf* would fire on her to stop, and provided all of us with cotton wool to insert in our ears while the guns were being fired! We waited for the sound of the guns, but nothing happened, and in about half an hour the same officer came along and said to us, "Don't be fearful, the other ship has stopped and there will be no firing!" Our cabin doors were unlocked, the men on the upper deck were allowed out, the ladies were requested not to show themselves, and another officer ran along the deck saying, "We've catched her, we've catched her—a neutral this time." The "catched" vessel had stopped and was lying very near the *Wolf*. The

name on the stern proclaimed her to be the *Igotz Mendi* of Bilbao, and she was flying the Spanish flag. In a short time a prize crew left the *Wolf* in her motor-launch, and proceeded to the other ship. After they had been aboard her a few minutes, a message came back that the Spanish ship was from Delagoa Bay to Colombo, with a cargo of 5800 tons of coal for the British Admiralty authorities in Ceylon. The chagrin of the Germans may be imagined when they realised that they had captured this ship just too late to save the *Hitachi*. Here was a ship with ample coal, which, had it been captured a few days before, would have enabled the Germans to save the *Hitachi* and take her as a prize to Germany, as they had always desired to do. The *Igotz Mendi* had left Lorenco Marques on November 5, and was due at Colombo on the 22nd.

Before 9 A.M. on the morning of the capture both ships had turned about, the prize now being in command of the Germans, and were going back on the course the *Wolf* had followed since the destruction of the *Hitachi*. Discussion was rife among the prisoners as to what would be done with the new capture, and whether the Commander of the *Wolf* would redeem his promise to transfer the married couples to the "next ship caught."

VI.

The two ships steamed along in company for the next three days, usually stopping towards sunset for communications and sending orders. At daybreak on the 13th both arrived at the Nazareth Bank, and before 9 A.M. were lashed together. On such occasions the *Wolf* never dropped anchor, so that she could be up and away at the slightest warning; the prize ship was always the one to drop anchor. On the previous Tuesday the *Wolf* had been lashed alongside the *Hitachi;* here, on this Tuesday, was the *Wolf* lashed alongside another captured ship in the very same place! Again the daring and coolness of our captors amazed us. Coaling from the *Igotz Mendi* to the *Wolf* at once began, and a wireless installation was immediately rigged up by the Germans on the Spanish ship. Coaling proceeded all that day, and the German officers and crews on both ships were very busy.

On the morning of the 14th orders were given to the married couples on the *Wolf* to get their light baggage ready for transference to the Spanish ship, as she and the *Wolf* might have to separate at any moment. Our heavy baggage would be transferred if time allowed. Evidently something was in the air, some wireless message had been picked up, as the seaplane was being brought up from the 'tween decks and assembled in great haste on the well-deck.

The *Wulfchen* went up about 4.20 and returned about 5.30, and in the interval our heavy luggage had been brought up from the *Wolf's* hold ready to be transhipped to the *Igotz Mendi*. At dusk that evening the married people were transferred to the latter ship. The next morning we were still alongside the *Wolf*, and remained there till the morning of the 17th, our heavy baggage being transhipped in the interval. There had also been transferred the Colonel of the A.A.M.C. and three other men in ill-health. The message the seaplane brought back had evidently been a reassuring one, and we heard a long time afterwards that the *Wolf* had picked up a wireless from a Japanese cruiser, presumably looking for the *Hitachi*, only thirty miles away. Hence the alarm! Unfortunately for us, if this report were true, the cruiser did not turn aside to look in the most obvious place where a ship like the *Wolf* would hide; so once more the *Wolf* was safe.

If only there had been a couple of cruisers, carrying a seaplane or two, in each ocean, the *Wolf* could have been seen, and her career brought to an end long before. The same end would probably have been attained on this occasion, if a wireless message had been sent from Delagoa Bay to Colombo, saying that the *Igotz Mendi* had left the former port for the latter, with 5800 tons of coal on board. The strong wireless installation on the *Wolf*, which picked up every message within a large radius, but of course never sent any, would have picked up this message, and the *Wolf* would probably have risen to the bait, with the result that she could have been caught by an armed vessel sent in search of her on that track. For it must have been known that a raider was out in those waters, as the disappearance of the *Hitachi* could only have been due to the presence of one.

Coaling proceeded without cessation till the morning of the 17th, when the *Wolf* moved off a short distance. Passengers on mail boats familiar with the process of coaling ship at Port Said, Colombo, or any other port, can imagine the condition of these ships after three or four days' incessant coaling day and night. The appearance of the *Igotz Mendi* was meanwhile undergoing another change. When captured she was painted white, and had a buff funnel, with her Company's distinguishing mark. She was now painted the Allied grey colour, and when her sides and funnel had been transformed, the two ships sailed away, and on the evening of the 17th, after final orders and instructions had been given, parted company. For some days after this painting was the order of the day on the Spanish ship, which was now grey on every part visible.

The captain of the Spanish ship was relieved of his duties —and also of his cabin, which the German captain had an-

nexed, leaving the owner thereof the chart-room to sleep in. He was naturally very chagrined at his ill-fortune, especially as he said he had been told by the Consul at Lorenco Marques that the course between there and Colombo was quite clear, and had not even been informed of the disappearance of the *Hitachi*, though she had been overdue at Delagoa Bay about a month. Consequently he had been showing his navigation lights at sea, and without them he would probably not have been seen, as it was about 1 A.M. when the *Wolf* picked him up. The remaining Spanish officers took their watch on the bridge, always with a member of the prize crew in attendance; the Spanish engineers remained in charge of the engine-room, again with a German always present, and the Spanish crew remained on duty as before. There was a prize crew of nine Germans on board, the Captain, Lieutenant Rose, who had also been in charge of the *Hitachi* after her capture, and the First Officer, who had also filled that post on the *Hitachi*, being the only officers.

The *Igotz Mendi* had been completed in 1916, and was a ship admirably fitted for her purpose, which, however, was not that of carrying passengers. Her decks were of iron, scorchingly hot in the tropics, and icy cold in northern latitudes. There was no place sheltered from the sun in which to sit on deck, and the small awnings which were spasmodically rigged up were quite insufficient for the purpose. There were no cabins except those provided for the officers, who generously gave them up to the married couples on board, taking quarters much more crowded and much less desirable. The cabins were quite suitable for one occupant each, but very cramped for two, the one occupied by my wife and myself being only seven and a half feet square. Each contained one bunk and one settee, the latter being a sleeping-place far from comfortable, as it was only 5½ feet long by about 20 inches wide, and the floor space was very narrow and restricted. There were four cabins, two on each side of a narrow alleyway about two feet wide, while one married couple occupied the chief engineer's cabin further aft, quite a roomy apartment. The four men above mentioned occupied a space under the poop; it could not be dignified by the name of cabin. It was very small, only one occupant could dress at a time, and immediately in front of it was a reeking pig-sty with three full-sized occupants. The passage to it from the saloon on the upper deck was often a perilous one in rough weather and in the dark, for there was never any light showing on board at night during the whole cruise. This, then, was to be our home for the next few months. We did not know for how long, but we regarded the prospect with a certain amount of equanimity, as the ship was unarmed,

and we knew we should not be fired on by a hostile cruiser, as might have been the case if we had remained on the *Wolf*. There was on board a certain amount of live stock; a couple of cows, each had a calf born on board; these all met the usual fate of such things on appropriate occasions.

When we arrived on the Spanish boat we were served with meals at the times to which the Spanish officers had been accustomed — *i.e.*, breakfast at 9 and supper at 4; but these times were soon afterwards changed to breakfast at 8.30, tiffin 12.30, and supper 5.30. We were lucky to get fresh food for some days. But this soon came to an end, though the stock of muscatels, a quince preserve called membrillo, and Spanish wine lasted very much longer.

For many days after we parted company with the *Wolf* we ambled and dawdled through the sea on a south-westerly course, sometimes stopping altogether for an hour or two, sometimes for half a day, sometimes for a whole day.

On the afternoon of the 23rd the Germans became very agitated at the sight of smoke on the horizon. At first we all thought it was the *Wolf*, but before long we could see two columns of smoke, evidently coming from steamers travelling together. We at once changed our course, and manœuvred at full speed in such a way that we quickly got out of sight of the smoke. Then we resumed our original course, and the German captain came down from the bridge and told us there was no relief for us yet. We all felt that if the *Hitachi* had only avoided distant smoke as the German captain had done, we need never have made the acquaintance of the *Wolf*.

On the 24th we again met the *Wolf* in the evening. Whenever the *Wolf* had an appointment to meet her prize at a certain time and place, the prize always hoisted recognition signals directly she saw the *Wolf* on the horizon. These were made of wicker, and varied in shape on different occasions.

We were now well to the south of Africa, in the roaring forties; we saw many schools of whales, and albatrosses accompanied us for several days. By December 1 we had begun to steer N.W., and on the 3rd the captain informed us we were the nearest we should ever be to Cape Town, the port to which I had set out. We were then 150 miles off. We met the *Wolf* again on the 5th, and travelled in her company during the remainder of that day and the next two, stopping, as usual, for communication and the sending of stores to us in the evenings just before sunset. The *Wolf* on this occasion told us she had sunk the American sailing vessel *John H. Kirby*, from America to East London, with a cargo of 400 motor-cars on board, when two days from her destination, the officers and crew being taken on board the *Wolf*.

The evening of December 7

was the last occasion we saw the *Wolf* for many days. The two ships now shaped a course for the Brazilian island of Trinidad, where it was understood the *Wolf* would coal from her prize, and with her spend the Christmas holiday.

VII.

It must not be supposed that the life of the prisoners on the *Igotz Mendi* in any way approximated to that of passengers on an ordinary passenger ship. To begin with, there were no ship's servants to wait on us with the exception of the Spanish steward, a youth who waited at table and excelled in breaking ship's crockery. If the cabins were to be kept clean, we had to do it ourselves. Every morning saw the occupants sweeping out and cleaning up their cabins, as no ship's servant ever entered them. The water supply was very limited, and had to be fetched by ourselves —no matter what the weather —sometimes from the forepeak, and sometimes from a pump near the ship's galley. Washing water and drinking water were served out twice a day, at 8 A.M. and 4 P.M., an ordinary water-can being the allowance of the former, and a water-bottle that of the latter. The supply of washing water was very inadequate, and no hot water was ever available. After washing ourselves, we had to wash our clothes in the same water—for there was of course no laundry on board —and then the cabin floor after that. It was impossible to have a proper bath all the time we were on board. There was no water supply in the bathroom, and it was kept in an extremely dirty condition. The saloon, about 18 feet square, in which all the meals were served in two sittings, was very rarely clean, and the habits of the captain's pup did not improve matters, while the table appointments were often disgusting. The tablecloth was filthy after the first meal or so, thanks to the rolling of the ship, but was only changed twice, sometimes only once, a week. Cups were used without saucers, and spoons gradually disappeared, so that towards the end one had to suffice between four or five persons.

We got thoroughly sick of the food provided, but the German officers and crew had just the same. The *Hitachi* had been carrying 10,000 cases of canned crab to England. A great part of this was saved and divided between the *Wolf* and her prize. None of us ever want to see or hear of this commodity again; we were fed on it till most of us loathed it, though when it was served we perforce had to eat it or dry bread, and several of us chose the latter. Bully beef, every variety of bean, dried vegetables, bean soup, dried fish that audibly announced its advent to the table, and pea-

soup we got just as sick of, till, long before the end, all the food served nauseated us. Tea, sometimes made in a coffee-pot, sometimes even with salt water, was the usual hot drink provided, but coffee was for some time available once a day. We owe a great debt to one of our fellow-prisoners, a ship's cook from one of the other captured ships, who in return for his offer to work as baker was promised his liberty, which fortunately he has now secured, though no thanks to the Germans. He baked, under the most difficult conditions, extraordinarily good bread, and over and over again we should have gone without food but for this.

Mention has been made of the ship's rolling. Her capacity for this was incredible—in the smoothest sea, whether stopped or under steam, she rolled heavily from side to side, and caused great discomfort and inconvenience to all on board. The remark, "The Mendi roll, fresh every day for every meal, for breakfast, dinner, and tea," was made by some one at almost every meal-time, as we clutched at our food, gliding or jumping from end to end of the saloon table, accompanied by the smashing of crockery and upsetting of liquids and soup. Even the captain was astonished at the rolling of the ship, as he might well be, when one night he, in common with most of us, was flung out of his berth. No ship ever rolled like it!

As may be imagined, there was not much to do on board. The few books we had between us were passed round and read over and over again. Some were also sent over from the *Wolf* for us. Card games of various kinds also helped to pass the time, which nevertheless dragged very heavily.

We next picked up the *Wolf* on the afternoon of Dec. 19, and the two ships proceeded on parallel courses for Trinidad, but about 8 P.M. both turned sharply round and doubled on their tracks, proceeding on a south-easterly course at full speed. We learned the reason for this the next day. We had been proceeding towards Trinidad, where German raiders had previously coaled and hidden; but Brazil was now in the war, so that hole was stopped, and the *Wolf* had intercepted a wireless from the commander of a Brazilian cruiser to the garrison on Trinidad. Hence her rapid flight! But for that wireless message the *Wolf* would have walked right into the trap, and we should have been free within twelve hours from the time the message was picked up.

Once again, wireless had been our undoing. The *Hitachi* had wirelessed the hour of her arrival at, and departure from, Singapore and Colombo; the *Wolf* of course had picked up the messages and was ready waiting for her. One other ship, if not more, was caught in just the same way. The *Matunga* had wirelessed, not even in code, her departure, with the nature of her cargo, from Sydney to New Guinea,

and she wirelessed again when within a few hours of her destination. The *Wolf* waited for her, informed her that she had on board just the cargo the *Wolf* needed, captured, and afterwards sunk her. The *Wolf's* success in capturing ships and evading hostile cruisers was certainly due to her intercepting apparently indiscriminate wirelessing between ships and between ships and shore—at one time in the Indian Ocean the *Wolf* was picking up news in four languages—and to her seaplane, which enabled her to scout thoroughly and to spot an enemy ship long before she could have been seen.

The two ships proceeded on their new course at full speed for the next two days. On the 21st they slowed down, hoping to coal in the open sea. The next day both ships stopped, but the condition of the sea would not admit of coaling; we were then said to be about 700 miles E. of Monte Video. It was of course a disappointment to the Germans that they were prevented from coaling and spending their Christmas under the shelter of Trinidad; but it became quite clear that all the holes for German raiders in this part of the ocean had now been stopped, and that they would have to coal in the open sea or not at all. But the disappointment was mitigated by other wireless news received. The Commander of the *Wolf* called all his men together, and harangued them to the effect that the latest news was that Russia and Roumania were now out of the war, having given in to Germany, that the war would certainly be over in six months, and that the *Wolf* would then go home in safety to a victorious, grateful, and appreciative Fatherland. Some such spur as this was necessary to the men, who were getting very discontented with the length of the cruise and conditions prevailing, notably the monotony of the food and threatened shortage of food and drink and tobacco. Christmas Eve was still too rough for the ships to tie up alongside, and our Christmas the next day was the reverse of merry. One cow and three pigs had been killed for the Christmas feast, but they did not go far between nearly 800 people, and all the prisoners, at least, were glad when the dismal farce of Christmas under such conditions was over.

The weather on Boxing Day was only a little more favourable than that on Christmas Day, but the Germans decided to wait no longer to coal the *Wolf*. They had previously conveyed water to our ship from the *Wolf* in boats. The same method of transferring coal was discussed, but that idea was abandoned. At 5 P.M. she tied up alongside us. She bumped into us with considerable force when she came up, and not many of us on board the *Igotz Mendi* will ever forget that night. Both ships were rolling heavily and repeatedly bumping into each

other, each ship quivering from end to end, and the funnel of the *Igotz Mendi* was visibly shaking at every fresh collision. Sleep was impossible for any one on our boat; in fact many feared to turn in at all, as they thought some of the plates might be stove in. The next day was no better, but rather worse. About 6 P.M. there was a great crash, which alarmed all; it was due to the *Wolf* crashing into and completely smashing part of the bridge of our ship. This was enough for the Germans. They decided to suspend operations, and at 7 P.M. the *Wolf* sheered off, having coaled 600 tons in twenty-five hours. The coaling process had severely damaged the *Wolf*, many of whose plates were badly dented. We had lost eighteen large fenders between the ships, and the *Wolf* was leaking to the extent of twelve tons an hour. The *Igotz Mendi* had come off better. None of her plates were dented, she was making no water, and the only visible signs of damage to her were many twisted and bent stanchions on the port side that met the *Wolf*.

We had been allowed to send letters for Christmas—censored, of course, by the Germans — to our *Hitachi* friends on the *Wolf;* and when the two ships were alongside we were allowed to speak to them, though conversation under such conditions was very difficult, as one minute our friends would be several feet above us and the next below us, with the rolling of the ship; and the noise of the coaling, shouting of orders, and roaring of the water between the ships was deafening.

VIII.

We had been encouraged by the Germans to think—they had in fact definitely told us—that the *Igotz Mendi* with us on board was to be sent to Spain when the Germans released her. On December 29, all of which and the previous day, together with many succeeding days, were spent in transferring our cargo coal to our bunkers, the Germans on our ship and on the *Wolf* ostentatiously bade each other good-bye, and letters from prisoners on the *Wolf* were brought to us to post in Spain when we landed. The idea of the *Wolf* remaining out till the war was over in six months was abandoned, and we were told the *Wolf* would now go home to Germany. Why we were told this, the first time we had been informed of the *Wolf's* plans, we never knew, except that it might have been an excuse to keep dragging us over the seas, for the *Wolf* would never have allowed us to get ashore before she reached Germany. Then we really began to think we were going to be landed in Spain, and the news raised the spirits

of all of us. Those who had been learning Spanish before now did so with redoubled energy, and it seemed as if the end of our cruise, with our freedom, was really in sight, especially as the captain had told some of us on the 16th that in six weeks our captivity would be over. Some of us, however, still inclined to the belief that the Germans would release the ship and order her back to Java or Colombo or Calcutta, while others believed we should ultimately be landed in Dutch Guiana or Mexico.

On the last day of the year a rumour went round the ship that we should be taken far north to a point from which the *Wolf* could get to Germany before we could reach Spain. That, in the opinion of most of us, put an end to the prospects of landing in Spain. The Germans were not likely to run any risk of our giving information, and after the ships had separated there was still a chance of the prize being intercepted by an Allied cruiser before the *Wolf* got home, and if that had happened the *Wolf's* goose would have been cooked indeed. So Spain looked very improbable. I approached the captain on the last day of the year and spoke to him on the point. He confirmed the rumour. I made a vigorous, though I knew it would be quite a useless, protest against this scheme. I pointed out that the ship, which by then would be almost empty, was not a suitable one in which to carry women and children into the North Atlantic in mid-winter gales, and that people who had spent many years in the tropics would not be able to stand such weather, unprovided as they were with winter clothing; also that in case of distress we could call for no help, as our wireless would only receive and not send messages. The captain brushed these complaints aside, saying the ship was in good trim and could stand any weather, that it would only be intensely cold on a very few days, that arrangements would be made that we should suffer as little from the cold as possible, and that there was no great likelihood of our being in distress.

I then pointed out to him that our own Government prohibited our women from travelling through the submarine zone at all, but that he proposed to send them through it twice, and to give us a double dose of the North Atlantic at the very worst time of the year. He replied that going north we should go nowhere near the submarine zone—he was just as anxious to avoid submarines as we were—and when we parted, far up in the North Atlantic, the *Igotz Mendi* would be given a "submarine pass" guaranteeing her safety from attack by the U-boats, and special lights to burn at night. I replied that I failed to see the use of a "submarine pass," as U-boats torpedoed at sight, and would not trouble to ask for a pass.

He replied by asking me if I had ever heard of a neutral boat being torpedoed without warning. I answered that I had heard of such being done many times, and reminded him that the *Igotz Mendi* was painted the Allied grey colour, and therefore would not be recognised as a neutral, but regarded by the U-boats as an enemy ship. He ended the interview by saying that he was carrying out the orders of the *Wolf's* commander, and had no choice but to obey. This news of the *Wolf's* intentions angered us all, and we all felt that there was very little chance of ever seeing land again, unless an Allied cruiser came to our aid. We regarded this plan of the Germans as a deliberate one to sink us and the ship when they had got all they wanted out of her.

The two ships had parted on the evening of the 30th, both going north, and we did not see the *Wolf* again till the morning of January 4. She was then seen to be overhauling a ship on the horizon. We followed at a short distance, and before long saw a ship in full sail. The *Wolf* approached her, spoke her, and to our intense astonishment released her. It seemed too good to be true that the *Wolf* would leave any ship she met quite unmolested, but so it was—for a short time. It was between ten and eleven when the *Wolf* and her prize proceeded on their original course, and the sailing ship crossed our course astern. About 1.30 P.M., however, we changed our course and turned about. We were all mystified as to what was going to happen, until we saw a sail on the horizon. The *Wolf's* purpose was evident then. She was going back to destroy the ship whose existence she had forgiven in the morning. Imagine the feelings of the crew of her prey, seeing the *Wolf* bearing down on her in the morning, their suspense as to their fate and that of their ship, their joy at their release, and—here was the *Wolf* again. What would their fate be now? The *Wolf* did not leave them long in doubt. She came up to her prize about 5 P.M. She was a four-masted barque in full sail, and made a beautiful picture as she lay bathed in floods of golden light from the setting sun. Before dark, however, preparations had begun to remove her officers and crew and provisions, — she was in ballast from the Cape to S. America, — and this was completed in a few hours. We were invited by the Germans to stay up and see the end. We waited up till past eleven and saw lights flitting about the doomed ship, as the German sailors were removing some things, making fast others, and placing the bombs to blow her up. But none waited up for the end, which we heard took place after midnight. The ship first canted over, her sails resting on the water, righted herself, and then slowly disappeared. It was a beautiful moonlight night for the commission of so dark a deed. The Germans afterwards told us that when the *Wolf* first spoke

the barque, she gave her name and said she was a Norwegian ship, and so was released. The *Wolf*, they said, had afterwards discovered from her shipping register that she was British-owned before the war, and therefore to be destroyed.

We had hoped our captors might have put us all on the sailing-ship and sent us off on her to S. America, as the *Wolf* would have been well away and out of danger before we could have got ashore. But they did not entertain any such idea. Some of us requested that the lifeboats of the sailing-ship might be sent over to the *Igotz Mendi*, as we had only two lifeboats, a couple of small dinghies, and an improvised raft, not sufficient for sixty-five people; but the Germans would not send us these lifeboats, as they said they were leaky!

We remained in company of the *Wolf* for the next few days, and at 7 P.M. on the 10th the *Wolf* again came alongside in the open sea and coaled from us till 4 P.M. on the next day. Conditions were slightly better than on the previous occasion, but still quite sufficiently unpleasant. More fenders were lost, and the *Wolf* was further damaged, and the great uproar caused by the winches going all night, the periodic emptying of ashes, dragged in iron buckets over the iron decks, the shifting of coal from the bunkers immediately underneath our cabins, and the constant bumping of the ships, made sleep quite out of the question, and we were very glad indeed when the *Wolf* sheered off. On this occasion the way in which she came alongside and sheered off was a beautiful piece of seamanship. On the 11th we again saw and spoke to our *Hitachi* friends on the *Wolf*—the last opportunity we had of speaking to them. On the next day we crossed the Equator, and then for some days we saw the *Wolf* no more.

On January 14 I approached the captain and asked him if the Germans on the *Wolf*, when they got to Germany, would have any means of finding out whether we on the *Igotz Mendi* had safely arrived in Spain. He replied that they would. I then asked him whether, if we were all lost on the *Igotz Mendi* on her return voyage to Spain, the German Government would inform the British Government of our fate. He replied that would certainly be done. I further asked him whether we might send letters for the *Wolf* to have posted in Germany in the event of our not arriving in Spain. Most of us had to settle up our affairs in some way in case we might be lost at sea, and wished to write farewell letters to our home people. The captain said this might also be done, and the letters would not be posted if the *Igotz Mendi*, with us on board, got back safely to Spain. "But," he added, "we have changed our plans, and now intend that you shall be landed in Norway. It will be safer for you all, and you will not have to risk meeting our submarines

in the Atlantic again. When we arrive in Norwegian waters the German prize crew will be taken off this ship after the *Wolf* has got home, the ship will be handed over to the Spaniards, and you will all be landed in Norway, from where you can easily make your way to England." Here was quite a new plan — how much truth there was in this declaration will be seen hereafter. From now onwards definite promises began to be made to us concerning the end of our captivity—"in a month you'll be free"; "the next full moon will be the last you will see at sea," &c.

We were, of course, proceeding north every day, keeping in mid-Atlantic, always well off the trade-routes, though of course we crossed some on our way north. We did not meet the *Wolf* on the 22nd, as our Captain evidently expected to do, and we waited about for her several hours. But next day we did meet her, and we were then told that in eighteen days we should be ashore. We were then about 30° N., and we parted from the *Wolf* the same afternoon. It was always a great relief to us all when we parted from her keeping our ship's company of prisoners intact. For the men amongst us feared we might all be put upon the *Wolf* to be taken to Germany, leaving our wives on the *Igotz Mendi*. This, so we had been told, had been the intention of the *Wolf's* commander when the prisoners were first put on the Spanish boat. He had ordered that only women and prisoners above sixty and under sixteen should be put on the *Igotz Mendi;* but the German doctor, a humane and kindly man, would have nothing to do with this plan, and declared he would not be responsible for the health of the women if this were done. So we owe it to him that wives were not separated from their husbands during this anxious time, as the Commander of the *Wolf* had inhumanly suggested.

IX.

A last effort was made to persuade the captain to ask the *Wolf's* commander to release the Spanish ship here, take all the prize crew off, and send us back to Cape Town, for a suspicion began to grow in our minds that Germany and nowhere else was the destination intended for us. But our captain would not listen to this suggestion, and said he was sure that the Spanish captain would not go back to Cape Town even if he promised to do so.

On the next day, January 24, relief seemed nearer than it had done since our capture, four months before. I was sitting on the starboard deck, when suddenly I saw coming up out of the mist, close to our starboard bow, what looked like a

cruiser with four funnels. The Spanish officer on the bridge had apparently not seen it, neither apparently had the German sailor, if indeed he was even on the bridge at that moment. I rushed to inform the American sailing-ship captain of my discovery, and he confirmed my opinion that it was a four-funnelled warship. The Germans were by this time fully alarmed, and slowed down a little; the captain, evidently also thinking that the vessel was a cruiser, went to his cabin to dispose of the ship's papers, the crew got into their best uniform to surrender, and it looked as if help were at hand at last. We were all out on deck, delighted beyond words, and saw the ship—it must be remembered that it was a very misty day—resolve itself into two two-funnelled ships, apparently transports, one seemingly in distress and the other standing by. Soon, however, they proceeded on their course and crossed our bows fairly close. We were then all ordered to our cabins, and we saw the two ships steam off to the westward without having spoken us or given any evidence of having seen us at all.

It was a most bitter disappointment, comparable to that of shipwrecked sailors on a desert island watching a ship expected to deliver them pass out of sight. But it was a great relief to the Germans. We never discovered what ships they were, but the American said he believed them to be American transports and that each mounted a gun.

In the middle of the excitement the Spanish chief mate had rushed on to the bridge into the wireless room, and while the wireless operator was out of the room or his attention had been diverted, he took from their place all the six or eight bombs on board and threw them overboard. It was a plucky act, for had he been discovered by the armed sentry while doing it, he would undoubtedly have been shot on the spot. On the next day an inquiry was held as to the disappearance of the bombs, which would of course have been used to sink the ship, and the chief mate owned up. He said that he did it for the sake of the women and children on board; as the sea was rough their lives would have been in danger if they had been put in the lifeboats when the ship was bombed. He was confined to his cabin for the rest of the voyage, and later sentenced by the Commander of the *Wolf* to three years' imprisonment in Germany and a fine of 2000 marks. From this time all the Spanish officers were relieved of their duties.

The Germans had told us that, in the case of the prize being captured while the weather was rough, the ship would not be bombed or sunk, as they had no desire to endanger the lives of the women and children amongst us. In fact, so they said, the ship would not be bombed under any conditions when once the *Wolf* had got all the coal she

wanted. Nevertheless, the next time we met the *Wolf* a new supply of bombs was put on board our ship. At the same time, an extra lieutenant came aboard, additional neutrals were sent over to help work the ship, and the prize crew was increased from nine to nineteen.

The Kaiser's birthday, which fell on a Sunday, was marked by a most terrific storm. The seas were between 30 and 40 feet high, and it seemed impossible that the ship could live. However, notwithstanding terrible rolling, she shipped very little water, though all of the prisoners were alarmed at the rough weather and the rolling of the ship. From this day onwards we lived in a condition of great misery, and death stared us in the face many times. It got colder and colder every day for a considerable time; the food got worse and worse and we were on short rations, the ship became more and more dirty, smokes ran short—only some ancient dusty shag brought from Germany by the *Wolf* and some virulent native tobacco from New Guinea remained—and conditions generally became almost beyond endurance. Darkness fell very early in these far northern latitudes, and the long nights were very dreary and miserable. From this time onwards we had very dirty weather, and the worst storms seemingly on Sundays. On February 5 we again met the *Wolf*—we had sighted her on the evening of the 4th, but it was too rough then to communicate. With the *Wolf's* usual luck the weather moderated next day, and the ships stopped. Just as the Germans on land always seemed to get the weather they wanted, so they were equally favoured at sea. This was noticed over and over again.

Those who had written letters to be sent on the *Wolf* sent them over on this day, and the Spanish chief mate expected to be sent on the *Wolf*, as we might not meet her again. Luckily for him, however, he was not transferred, and neither he nor we ever saw the *Wolf* again after the morning of February 6.

We heard from the *Wolf* that she was getting very short of food, and that there was much sickness, including many cases of scurvy, on board.

The next day we entered the Arctic circle. The cold was intense, the temperature falling as low as 14° F. in some of our cabins. There was no heating apparatus on the ship, with the exception of a couple of small heating pipes in the saloon. The cabins were icy cold. The curtains froze to the ports, all the cabin roofs leaked, it was impossible to keep the floors and bedding dry, and in our cabin, in addition, we had water constantly flowing and swishing backwards and forwards between the iron deck of the ship and the wooden floor of the cabin. On many nights we emptied five or six buckets full of icy water from where it accumulated under the

settee which had to be used as a bed. At last I persuaded the captain to allow one of the sailors to drill a hole in the side of the cabin, so that the water could have an outlet on to the deck. The ports of the cabins had all long ago been painted black, in order that no light might show through at night. We had to sit in these cold and dark cabins during the day, and often there was nowhere else to sit, as the weather prevented us from being on deck, which was frequently covered with frost and snow. The electric light was on for only a limited time each day, so, as the ports could not be opened, it being far too cold, we asked and obtained permission to scratch a little of the paint off the ports in our cabin. This made things a trifle more bearable, but it can easily be imagined how people who had been living in tropical climates for many years fared under such conditions. It was nothing short of cruel to expose women and children to this after they had been dragged in captivity over the seas for many months. The captain had ordered a part of the bunkers to be cleared, so that the prisoners might sit there in the cold weather. But the place was so dirty and uncomfortable, and difficult of access, in addition to being in darkness and quite unprovided with seats, that most of the prisoners preferred the crowded little saloon.

On the morning of February 7 we for the first time encountered ice-floes, when attempting the Northern passage between Greenland and Iceland. About 11 A.M. we stopped and hooted for the *Wolf*, as a fog had come on. We waited for some hours in the ice, but no answering signal came; so the captain decided to turn back, as he thought it impossible to force a way through the ice. We therefore went back again on our course, the captain hoping that the wind would change and cease blowing the ice-floes from off the shores of Greenland. After a day or two on this course we resumed our attempt to go to the north of Iceland, evidently to escape the attention of the British ships which the Germans expected to encounter between the south of Iceland and the Faroes. But before long it became evident that ice was still about, and in the darkness of the early morning of February 11 we bumped heavily against ice several times. This time the attempt to go through the Northern passage was abandoned, and the ship turned round to try her luck in the passage which was not expected to be so free from British attentions.

To add to our miseries, the captain told us on February 11, *for the first time*, that it was, and always had been, the intention to take us on the *Igotz Mendi* to Germany, there to be interned in civilian prisoners' camps. He told us, too, that the women and those of the men over military age would be released at once;

but we all declined to believe anything else our captors told us, as they had deliberately and repeatedly deceived us by assuring us at various times they were going to land us in Spain or Norway, or some other neutral country. At daylight on the 11th we were still among ice-floes, but going away from instead of meeting them; and on that morning we saw in the distance the coast of Iceland, the first land that we had seen since the Maldive Islands a week after our capture—*i.e.*, more than four months before.

We now shaped a course for the coast of Norway, keeping to the north of the Faroes, and on Sunday the 17th we again ran into a very heavy storm. Ever since the storm on the 27th of the month before, the propeller had been constantly racing and sending shudders through the ship from stem to stern. On this day this feature, which was always disconcerting and to a certain extent alarming, became more marked, and the thud with which the ship met the seas more and more loud—so loud, indeed, that on one occasion the captain thought we had struck a mine, and rushed from the saloon to the bridge to ascertain what damage had been done. The captain and crew had by this time become very anxious as to the fate of the *Wolf*, as no news had been received concerning her. Day after day on which the captain told us he expected news went by without any being received. But on the evening of the 19th the captain informed us that he had picked up a wireless message announcing the safe arrival of the *Wolf* at a German port. The Germans seemed singularly little elated at the news, and hardly ever mentioned the subject again after that evening. This was so different to what we had expected, that most of the prisoners did not believe the *Wolf* had got home.

X.

The Germans were now getting very anxious as they approached the blockade zone. They affected, however, to believe that there was no blockade, and that there was no need of one now that America was in the war. "No one will trade with us," they said; "accordingly there is no need for a blockade." Nevertheless they were at great pains to keep as far as possible from any place in which British ships might appear. But unfortunately not one did appear, here or anywhere else, to rescue us, although we felt certain in our own minds that some of our ships would be present and save us in these parts of the seas, which we believed were regularly patrolled. It was a bitter disappointment to us that we saw none. But

as some of the passengers remarked to the captain, "If there is no blockade, as the Germans say, why haven't you more raiders out, instead of only one, and why have so few been able to come out?" There was of course no answer to this! The captain further remarked that even if there were a blockade it would always be possible to get through it at the week-end, as all the British blockading fleet returned to port for that time! The *Wolf*, he said, came out through the blockade at the week-end, and got home through the blockade at the week-end. It was quite simple, we were to do the same!

On the 20th we were off Bergen and saw the coast in the distance, the next day we were nearer the coast, and on that night we encountered the greatest storm we experienced on the cruise. The wind was terrific, huge seas broke over the ship, the alleyway outside the cabins was awash all the night, and the water even invaded the saloon to a small extent. Articles and receptacles for water that had not been made absolutely fast in the cabins were tossed about; many cabins were drenched and running with water. The noise of the wind howling and the seas breaking on the deck was so alarming to those in the outside cabins that they assembled in the saloon, as sleep was out of the question. The ship, though steaming full speed, made no progress that night, but went back, and in three days, the 19th, 20th, and 21st, made only 100 knots. After such stormy nights, and in such bitter temperature, a breakfast of cold canned crab, or dry bread with sugar, or rice and hot water plus a very little gravy, or bread and much-watered condensed milk, was not very nourishing or satisfying, but very often that was all we had. This weather of course pleased the German captain, who said that no enemy ship would or could board him under such conditions. In fact, he said no enemy vessel would be out of port in such storms! They alone were sufficiently terrifying to the landsmen amongst us; the prospect of having to take to the lifeboats if the Germans took it into their head to sink the vessel if she were sighted by an enemy ship added to the fears of all of us. There had been no boat-drill, and the lifeboat accommodation was hopelessly inadequate for more than eighty people now on board. It is certain, with the mixed crew, that there would have been a savage fight for the boats. The prospect, looked at from any point of view, was alarming, and one of the greatest anxiety for us all.

On February 22 we rounded the Naze. Here, we thought, we should certainly come across some British vessel. But that day and the next passed—it seemed as if we too were to get in during the week-end!—and hope of rescue disappeared. The bearing of the Germans towards us became markedly changed. We were almost in

their clutches now, the arrival at Kiel and transference to Ruhleben were openly talked of, and our captors showed decided inclination to jeer at us and our misfortunes. We were told that all diaries, if we had kept them, must be destroyed, or we should be severely punished when we arrived in Germany. Accordingly, those of us who had kept diaries made ready to destroy them.

Sunday, February 24, dawned, a cold cheerless day. We were now in the comparatively narrow waters of the Skager Rack —our last chance had nearly gone. Most of us were resigned to our fate and saw no hope, but some said we still might see a British war vessel when we rounded the Skaw. At midday the sailor on the look-out came into the saloon and reported to the captain that a fog was coming on. "Just the weather I want," he exclaimed; "with this lovely fog we shall round the Skaw and get into German waters unobserved." It looked, indeed, as if our arrival in Germany were now a dead certainty.

But the fog that the captain welcomed was just a little too much for him; it was to prove his undoing instead of his salvation. The good old German God, about whom we had heard so much, was not going to see them through this time. For once *we* were to be favoured. The white fog thickened after the midday meal, and, luckily for us, it was impossible to see far ahead. Soon after two we passed a floating mine, and we knew that before long we should be going through a mine-field—not a very cheerful prospect with floating mines round us in a fog. But we were all too far gone to care; nothing could be much worse than imprisonment in Germany, and some of us were discussing the prospects and conditions of this when, at 3.30 on that Sunday afternoon, we felt a slight bump, as if the ship had touched bottom. Then another bump, and then still one more! We were fast! Were we really to be saved at the very last minute? It began to look like it, but it would not do to build too much on this slender foundation. The engines continued working, but no progress was made; they were reversed, still no movement. The fog was fairly thick, we could just make out through it the line of the shore, and the waves breaking on it some distance away; and two syrens were going at full blast, one from a lightship, one from a lighthouse. The German officers became agitated, a boat was got out, soundings made, and various means adopted to work the ship off, but all were of no avail. The captain admitted his charts of this particular spot were not new and not good. It was impossible to tell the state of the tide at this moment; we all hoped it might be high tide, for then our rescue would be certain. The engines were set to work from time to time, but no

movement could be made. Darkness fell, and found us still stuck fast. Our spirits had begun to rise, the prospect was distinctly brighter, and soon after six o'clock the assistant lieutenant went ashore in mufti to telephone to the nearest port, Frederikshavn, for help. What reply he received we never heard, but we *did* hear that he reported he was on a German ship from Bergen to Kiel, and wanted help. Lorenco Marques to Kiel, *viâ* Iceland, would have been nearer the truth!

About eight o'clock we heard from one of the neutrals among the crew that the captain of a salvage tug was shortly coming aboard to inquire into matters. The ladies among us decided to stay in the saloon while the captain of the tug interviewed the German captain in the chart-room above it. On the arrival of the tug captain on the bridge the ladies in the saloon created a veritable pandemonium in the saloon, singing, shrieking, and laughing at the top of their voices. It sounded more like a Christmas party than one of desperate prisoners in distress. The Danish captain departed; what had been the result of his visit we did not know, but at any rate he knew there were women on board. The German captain came down from the saloon, asked pleasantly enough what all the noise was about, and said, "I have offered the salvage people £5000 to tow the ship off. Money is nothing to us Germans. This will be done at four to-morrow morning, and we shall then proceed on our way to Kiel."

Some of us had talked over a plan suggested by the second mate of one of the captured ships, by which a neutral among the crew should contrive to go ashore in one of the tug's boats in the darkness, communicate with the nearest British Consul, and inform him of the situation and the desperate case we were in. We promised him £500, to be raised among the "saloon passengers," if by so doing our rescue should be accomplished.

We remained in the saloon talking over developments when we heard that a Danish gunboat had come nearly alongside, and that her commander was coming on board. He had presumably received a report from the captain of the tug. We heard afterwards that he had his suspicions about the ship, and had brought with him on board one of his own men to make inquiries of the crew, among whom were Norwegians, Swedes, and Danes, while he kept the German commander busy in the saloon. The previous mistake of taking the Danish captain on to the bridge was not to be repeated. The commander of the gunboat was to come into the saloon. So the ladies could not remain there and make their presence known, but some of them contrived to leave some of their garments on the table and settee in the saloon—a muff, hats, gloves, &c. These the Danish

commander must have seen; and not only that, for he saw some ladies who had stood in one door of the saloon before they were sent to their cabins when he entered at the other one. He also saw a passenger in khaki uniform, the Australian Major of the A.M.C., and other passengers standing with the ladies in the alleyway. If he had entertained any suspicions as to the correct character of the ship, which the Germans were of course trying to conceal, they must have been strongly confirmed by now. It was too late for us to be sent to our cabins, as a German sailor came and ordered. We had achieved our object.

It was a night of great unrest, but, finally, most of us lay down in our clothes. For very many nights we had been unable to rest properly owing to the violence of the weather, the possibility of having to leave the ship at any moment, and general anxiety concerning our desperate condition. At four in the morning we heard the engines working, as the captain had told us they would, but still no movement could be heard. Soon the engines ceased: it was evident then that the attempt to get the ship off must for the present be given up. The wind was rising and the sea getting rougher, and at 6 A.M. a German sailor came and knocked at the doors of all the cabins, saying, "Get up, and pack your baggage, and go ashore." It seemed too good to be true; never was order more willingly and gladly obeyed. But first we had to see how the ship stood with regard to the shore. We went out on deck to look —there was the blessed green shore, clear of fog, less than half a mile away, the first really solid earth we had seen near at hand since we left Colombo exactly five months before. It did not take us long to dress and throw our things into our bags. When we had done so and were ready to go to the lifeboats, we were told that we might take no baggage whatever, as the lifeboat was from a shore station and could save lives only, not baggage.

The German captain took his bad luck in good part; but he was, of course, as sick as we were rejoiced at the turn events had taken. He had known the night before he could get no help from the Danish authorities, as they refused towing assistance till all the passengers had been taken off the ship. But he had hoped to get off unaided at four in the morning. He professed great anger with the Danes, saying that if they had only helped as he requested, the ship could have been towed off in the night, and we with all our baggage could have been landed at a Danish port alongside a pier the next morning, instead of having to leave all our baggage behind on the ship. I fancy not many of us believed this; if the ship had been got off, we should have brought up at

Kiel and not at any Danish port. And, as the tug captain said afterwards, if he had towed the ship off, the Germans would have most likely cut the hawser directly afterwards; he would have received no pay for his work, and we certainly should not have landed in Denmark.

XI.

A fine lifeboat manned by sturdy Danish sailors was alongside the ship; the sea was very rough, but our ship steady, firmly embedded in the sandy bottom. Once more we all climbed a ship's ladder; the lifeboat was rising and falling almost the height of the ship with the heavy seas, and descent into it was not easy. But nothing mattered now; once over the side of the ship we were no longer in German hands, and were *free*. The waves dashed over and drenched us as we sat in the lifeboat; we were sitting in icy water, all of us more or less wet through. At last the lifeboat crew pulled for the shore, the high seas sweeping over us all the way. We grounded on the beach; the sturdy sailors carried some, others jumped into the water and waded ashore, and we were all on *terra firma*, free at last, after weary months of waiting and captivity. We had been saved at the eleventh hour, almost the fifty-ninth minute of it; we were at the gates of Germany, being due at Kiel the very next day. It was a miraculous escape if ever there was one, and came at a moment when all hope seemed gone. Would that the *Wolf* had gone ashore in the same place! All our fellow-countrymen on board her would then have been free, and they could have given information and saved us as well.

Once on dry land we walked up to the lighthouse. There we were received with open arms. The kindly Danes could not do enough for us. We had only what we stood up in; we dried our clothes, other dry garments were offered us, hot drinks and food were supplied liberally, and we were generally made much of. We had come back to life and warmth once more. The lighthouse staff and villagers vied with each other in their efforts to make us feel at home and comfortable, and after interviews with some Danish Government officials we were taken to hotels in Skagen, the name of the nearest town, a small summer bathing resort just to the south of the Skaw. After lunch, the first square meal we had had for months, we set off to telegraph to our relatives and friends, and announce we were still in the world. It was one of our greatest anxieties on board, that we could not communicate with our friends, who we knew

would be grieving over our disappearance, and, we feared, must have given us up for lost. The same afternoon we walked back to the beach to see if we could go aboard the stranded ship to retrieve our luggage, but the sea was far too rough to allow of this, and the German and Spanish crew had not been taken off. While on the beach we saw two floating mines exploded by a Danish gunboat. We had not only had a narrow escape from the Germans, but also from the dangers of a mine-field. The next day was again too rough for us to go aboard—in fact it was so rough that the lifeboat went out and took everybody off the ship, both Spanish and German. The Spanish first mate was thus saved, and after all did not serve his sentence in Germany. It was reported that a German submarine appeared to take off the German officers, but it was too rough to lower the boats, so this could not be contrived.

The *Igotz Mendi* was now deserted, but she had reverted to her original owners and was no longer a German prize. She would have been the only prize the *Wolf* had secured to take home—a neutral ship with only a few tons of coal on board, and a few married couples and sick and elderly men as prisoners. Not much to show for a fifteen months' cruise, and even that was denied the Germans; though the *Wolf* had certainly carried home a valuable cargo and some hundreds of prisoners, had sunk seven steamers and seven sailing-ships, and claimed many more ships sunk as a result of her mine-laying.

Never was there a more dramatic turning of the tables: the Germans were now interned and we were free. The German officers were sent off under guard to an inland town, and the sailors sent to a camp in another part of Denmark. The sailors did not attempt to disguise their joy at the turn events had taken. On their return to Germany they would have had a few weeks' leave, and then done duty in a submarine or at the front. Now, they were interned in a land where there was at least much more to eat than they could have hoped for in Germany, and their dangers were at an end till the war was over. They were marched under an armed guard of Danes up and down the village street several times on one of these days; they were all smiles, singing as they marched along.

The next day a hurricane was still blowing, and going aboard was still out of the question. The ship was blown farther inshore, and it began to look as if she would break up and we should see nothing of our personal belongings. The day after, however, was beautifully fine, and we left Skagen harbour in two motor barges and boarded the ship, which was in charge of the Danish authorities. After some difficulty, for the ship was in a state of great chaos, we secured all our baggage,

which was landed that night at Skagen much to our relief, as it was badly wanted. We had set foot on the *Igotz Mendi* for the last time.

The position of the ship was a unique one. She was a neutral ship, a German prize, stranded in neutral waters with a crew composed of Germans and neutral prisoners, and carrying passenger prisoners of many enemy nationalities —English, Australian, American, Japanese, Chinese, and Indian. The Danish authorities adjudged her, on the day after her stranding, to be a Spanish ship; and before leaving her the Spanish flag was hoisted at her stern, the first time that or any other flag had appeared there since that November morning when the Germans had captured her far away in the Indian Ocean.

During the week we had to give evidence to the Danish authorities concerning our capture and treatment on board. We were overwhelmed with kindness by the Danes, who made no secret of their sympathies with the Allies; invitations to dinners and parties flowed in, and we could not have accepted them all if we had stayed as many weeks as we had days. On Friday, March 1, most of us left Skagen. The whole village turned out to give us a good send-off. The ladies among us were presented with flowers and chocolates, the men with smokes, and we left with the heartiest good wishes of our warm-hearted hosts. From Skagen our passage was arranged by the British Consular authorities. We stayed a few days in Copenhagen, and then travelled through Sweden and Norway, leaving a port somewhere in that country for another somewhere in this, and so to London, where we arrived in a characteristic pea-soup fog on the morning of March 10, after incessant travelling by train and sea for a week. We feared that as we had escaped the Germans once, they might make a special effort to sink us crossing the North Sea; but fortunately the U-boats left us alone, though few, if any of us, turned in during those last two nights.

No comment need be made on the German procedure of dragging their prisoners, month after month, over the oceans. Such a thing had never been done before. Some men had been kept prisoners on the *Wolf* for nearly a year. It was hard enough on the men, but infinitely worse for the women. One had been eight months, one seven, and others five months in captivity, often under the worst possible conditions. But they all kept cheerful throughout, even when it appeared we were certain to be taken into Germany.

Every man is liable to think under such conditions that he is in a worse case than his fellow-captives. There were certainly examples of very

hard luck amongst us. The American captain had abandoned his sea calling for six years, and decided to make one more trip and take his wife to see her relatives in Newcastle, N.S.W. They never got there, but had eight months' captivity and were landed in Denmark instead. Many sailors captured in the Pacific had left the Atlantic trade after encounters with the U-boats in that ocean. One of the members of the Spanish crew had been a toreador, but his mother considered that calling too dangerous, and recommended the sea as safer. Her son now thinks otherwise; perhaps she does, too! I thought, until our timely rescue came, that our own case was a fairly hard one. I had retired, after spending twenty years in Government service in Siam, and we had decided to spend some months at least, possibly "the duration," in South Africa before proceeding home. Our plans went hopelessly astray, our health has not improved by the treatment; but although we took six months to get from Siam to London, the Germans have succeeded in getting us home much earlier than we, or they, anticipated.

Fortunately one usually forgets the miseries of sea travel soon after one gets ashore. But never, I think, will one of us ever forget our long captivity at sea with our enemies, or the canned crab, the bully beef, the beans, *and* the roll of the *Igotz Mendi*.

THE WATER-RATS.

BY ZERES.

"Keep the paddles swiftly going;
Rough and fierce the river's flowing,
Ram bol, Hurry bol, Hurry bol Äee.

See! the sun is fast declining,
To the moon his charge resigning,
Ram bol, Hurry bol, Hurry bol Äee.

Pull away, boys, nothing fearing,
Though the rapids we are nearing,
Ram bol, Hurry bol, Hurry bol Äee.

In the well-plied oar confiding,
Safely o'er them we are gliding,
Ram bol, Hurry bol, Hurry bol Äee.

Keep her clear that granite block there,
See, she nears the sunken rock there,
Ram bol, Hurry bol, Hurry bol Äee.

Now the threatened danger's over,
Nothing from her course shall move her,
Ram bol, Hurry bol, Hurry bol Äee.

Soon we'll make the ghat, my hearties!
Spend the night in jovial parties,
Ram bol, Hurry bol, Hurry bol Äee."

(*ad infinitum.*)

—*Assamese Boat Song.*

THE Conventional India of the picture-books—of 'Little Henry and his Bearer'—lay sleepily around them. That is to say: tall, tawny tiger-grass that brushed their elephant's forehead; green and feathery toddy-palms deep dipped in golden sunshine; and, in the distance, a vivid streak of crude turquoise, which betrayed the course of a mighty, crocodile-haunted river. The noonday sun beat impartially upon the jungle, the elephant, and the preposterously blue Brahmaputra—for that was the river's name. Incidentally, the elephant possessed a name too: she was called Maria.

Maria possessed no howdah, and the two young sportsmen who rode her clung desperately to the primitive "pad" of their lurching steed, and still more desperately to their double-barrelled '450s. Readers who may have studied photographs of elephant processions in Princely Indian Durbars need retain no illusions about Maria. She was neither ornamental, docile, nor sagacious. On the contrary, this old red-eyed slut of a timber-hauler from a tea-chest factory near by bore

about as much resemblance to the tusk-gilded aristocrats of Delhi as a charwoman bears to a duchess.

Her temper was uncertain, her gait was like an earthquake, and her belly and legs were shamelessly caked with cracked mud; caught in the *keddah*[1] at an advanced age, she was only half broken; and finally, it must be alleged against her character that her favourite beverage was planters' gin.

She had been handed over to the two Shikaris—a young police officer and his friend, a cavalry subaltern—free gratis and for nothing for a few days' shooting, and already her temporary owners were beginning to realise the truth of the adage which points out that it is often far better to give than to receive. They had been perambulating the jungle since dawn that morning, and the combination of the sun on their spines and Maria's sea-sick heaving shuffle was beginning to tell most unpleasantly upon both of them.

"I say," at length exclaimed the Subaltern, with that dreadful candour which characterises Young Humanity in moments of acute distress, "if this switchback business goes on much longer, I shall eat my soul out."

"*I* have," came a resigned reply from the other side of the moving mountain. Here Maria surpassing herself with a figure of eight stern waggle—as she slid into a *nullah*—both voices died away again into ominous silence. The Assistant Superintendent of Police was, at more normal moments, a pleasant-featured, tired-looking youth. His weary smile and eternal assumption of excessive boredom not infrequently proved the undoing of those unwary Orientals who failed to penetrate beneath his fatigued exterior. He formed rather a complete contrast to the soldier who now shared the elephant with him. The latter was a restless enthusiast and an incorrigible optimist of the genus irrepressible among subalterns: a species off whose backs work or worry, success or failure, roll as easily as water off a duck's. This particular specimen of a wholly satisfactory type of modern British youth had but recently left Rugby in order to join the Indian Army, where, in his own regiment—Hastings' Horse—he was popularly known as the Hun-Child. This on account of a certain cultivated martial ferocity of parade manner, which was, however, much to his own annoyance, very heavily discounted by his preposterously juvenile appearance. He was at present on sick leave from Mesopotamia, and had just arrived from Calcutta in order to spend a generous week-end with his friend.

Suddenly the elephant stopped dead, and cocked her by no means coquettish ears.

"What's up *now?*" inquired the Subaltern, raising his head;

[1] *Keddah.* A round-up of wild elephants by domesticated ones.

"wonder if she's spotted a tiger. Old Morrison warned us she generally bolted when she did."

"More likely she's spotted pink rats after all that liquor she swallowed last night," grumbled the Policeman. "But, by Jove, no!" he added a second later, pulling himself upon the top of the pad. "Listen to that!"

An angry bubble squelched from the depths of the jungle straight ahead, and Maria waved her trunk thoughtfully. "*Rhino*," whispered the Policeman; "what a pity they're preserved just now."

"But," suggested the Subaltern guilefully, "you're allowed to shoot in self-defence, and we can't risk Maria's beauty bein' spoiled . . . a bull rhino can knock an elephant over if he catches her sideways."

The rhinoceros settled this knotty point in morality by suddenly making an entirely unprovoked assault upon the now hysterical Maria, to whom he appeared to have taken an instinctive aversion at first sight. The two Shikaris just had time to fire wildly together, and then their gun-shy elephant bolted.

When in a hurry elephants do not gallop, but on occasion they travel rather faster than if they did. When this happens their riders know exactly what a pea feels like when rattled inside an empty drum.

The rhinoceros, having missed his charge, stood staring with his pig-like eyes at the vanishing party, but made no attempt to follow up his initial success.

Maria having deposited both her English riders—one after the other—in clumps of clinging bamboo, then endeavoured to pluck her native Mahout from her neck with her fumbling trunk. Foiled in this laudable endeavour by repeated blows from the Mahout's *ankus*, she galumphed into a reach of the river, and squealed wildly for gin, with which to calm her now lacerated nervous system. Her Mahout smote her violently over the skull with the vigour of a navvy picking open a drain.

"Peace! my heart's treasure," he said suitably. "Fear nothing, little black pearl, for is not old Jamu with thee?" and he smote her again to show that he was. The little black pearl, thus reassured, waddled up out of the bed of the Brahmaputra, and plucked a young toddy-palm by way of light refreshment. Old Jamu inquired if she found it to her liking.

"Y' *'r'rumph!*" assented Maria curtly.

"And now, little princess, we return to seek the Sahib-Log."

"N' *'r'rumph!*" declined Maria firmly, and thereupon set off for camp at a sort of lollopping gambol, leaving her abandoned riders to find their way home—that is to say, to the police-officer's patrol-boat on the river—as best they might.

. . . . . .

The source of the Brahmaputra lies somewhere in Central Asia. Certain inquisitive souls have a perfect mania for looking for it. Somebody or other is finally supposed to have found it, and since nine people out of ten are not in a position to argue the point, we may as well accept the supposition as correct. The Brahmaputra is rather unique among rivers, and its perils are not dissimilar to those of the Dogger Bank with an occasional cyclone thrown in. Its dense fogs,[1] its shifting sandbanks, its iron reefs, its furious currents, its sudden floods, and its frequent storms, all tax the skill of the most experienced of navigators, many of whom have been known to declare openly that they feel far happier in a good honest Chinese typhoon than when on the bosom of India's greatest and most treacherous river.

At places—and this some two hundred miles from its mouth—it is not unfrequently six or seven miles broad during the monsoon, while on the other hand it sometimes squeezes itself through rocky defiles but a thousand yards in width, with all the swift rush of a rapid.

On its way to the sea it is fed by a thousand tributaries—the main stream of the many-channelled Ganges being one not unuseful contribution—and the confluence of such subsidiary streams are known locally as *mukhs*, or mouths.

Like all great arteries of traffic, whether they be railways, tubes, important thoroughfares, or, in this case, rivers, the lower stretches of the maze-like waterways of Eastern Bengal and Lower Assam are infested by a whole host of more or less professional criminals, whose activities are varied and multitudinous. Owing to the confusing manner in which, amid this perfect network of rivers, the channels shift and alter almost yearly, and also by reason of the recurrent and devastating inundations which preclude the construction of any adequate road, railway, or telegraph system, the process of bringing such elusive criminals to justice is no easy task. In consequence the local police seldom make any important "haul" without an infinity of stratagem that usually culminates in a battle royal.

In the actual case of the wild swampy belt of big-game haunted country in which the Young Policeman and his friend were shooting, the almost insurmountable difficulties of internal communication amid its trackless depths and tortuous backwaters rendered it a peculiarly favourite *locale* for the evil-doer in search of a safe refuge or a discreet rendezvous. Such local defiers of the Law are specialised in different forms of villainy, as three unbroken years in their midst had already taught the young Assistant Superintendent.

Firstly, there were the river pirates—frank *dacoits*—who swam on board anchored native

[1] Caused by snow-water encountering the heat of the plains.

craft at night, cut the throats of the sleeping crew, and after throwing their bodies overboard proceeded to occupy the ship themselves. Then there were opium and cocaine smugglers, disguised as simple fisher-folk, with illicit cargoes stored between the seams of their boats; Bengali anarchists seeking opportunities of meeting gun-runners from the Philippines; and a whole host of other queer—and desperate—malefactors outside the ken of the Constabulary in England. Indeed, the Young Policeman's lot, if not always an entirely happy one, was never devoid of incident, and prior to obtaining a few days' shooting-leave in his own district in the company of his friend, he had not ceased from, or paused in, his teasing labours for nearly eighteen overworked months. Even now—in local parlance—he was still at the end of the wire, which, translated into practical language, meant that his services still remained at the immediate disposal of his seniors in case of local emergency.

Dirty monsoon weather was blowing up from the direction of the distant Bay,[1] when the two Shikaris arrived home late that evening after their spill off the elephant.

As already explained, their shooting headquarters were established on board a river launch, which was at the disposal of the police officer and his armed constables when their duties took them afloat.

This launch—called the *Vampire*—was a crazy old sun-blistered stern-wheeler that was presumably propelled through the agency of steam. This presumption may be said to rest firstly on the fact that her decks were always deep in soot, and secondly, because she possessed a vertical projection amidships which bore some remote resemblance to a smoke-stack. In no other respects, however, did she conform to the popularly conceived idea of a steamboat.

The two boys, tired out after their long, hot, and profitless day on shore, scrambled gratefully on board again, and lowering themselves cautiously into two rickety deck-chairs, called loudly for liquid refreshment.

"Strikes me the snaggy old ditch is rising pretty fast to-night," remarked the weather-wise minion of the Law, putting down his empty tumbler with a sigh of content, and gazing dubiously across the raging brown flood of waters. "I shouldn't be at all surprised," he added fatalistically, "if half the countryside isn't under water by the morning."

"Well, then, we can do a Noah's Ark stunt in this bally old flat-iron of yours," replied the Hun-Child resignedly, as he too finished his peg; "only, personally speakin', I bar takin' that god-forsaken *hathi* on board for a cruise. Look at the old bitch now,"—and he nodded across the taffrail towards Maria's standings on the bank,—"she's as pleased as Punch

[1] Of Bengal, understood locally.

at havin' made both of us out voluntaries this mornin'. But what's the odds, so long as you're happy," he concluded philosophically. "Who's for a tub? Bag's I first!" and, darting swiftly into their common bathroom before protest was possible, he coolly annexed the premises, turned on both taps to their fullest extent, and, whistling with offensive triumph, proceeded to unlace *le dernier cri* in brown cavalry field-boots. A minute later, and a mighty splash testified to his gifts as a quick-change artist, as, lifting his voice in untuneful song, he began to make the evening hideous with sentimental noises.

> "And when I *tell* them
> How beautiful you *are*,
> They never ber-lieve me,
> They never ber-lieve me,"—

he chanted dolefully. And, picking his perilous way through five different verses in three distinct keys, he continued to lament the incredulity of the world at large in respect to the charms of a lady—identity not disclosed—who, as he stated in agonised falsetto, had one day promised to be his wife.

In the meantime, his less exuberant friend had received a cipher telegram, which he was even now decoding with his usual calm precision. Once decoded, it seemed to give him furiously to think, for he pulled a puzzling-looking survey map from the cabin wall and studied it carefully with wrinkled brow.

Tracing the complex courses of the maze-like waterways before him with his forefinger, he finally pricked two holes on the map with the points of his compasses, and then produced a protractor. Having taken certain measurements along the latter, and having compared them with the scale of the map, he then took out his watch, looked at the telegram again, and made some mental calculations in terms of time. These appeared to be more or less satisfactory, for, yawning to himself, he paused to kill a mosquito before returning on deck. Here he walked for'ard, and gently but firmly kicked the opium-sodden crew into some semblance of life, and further interrupted what appeared to be a game of skill or hazard among his police-constables.

"Get those two anchors up," he said quietly in the vernacular. "Where's the head *serang*?[1] On shore? Well, let him stop there. Tell the engineer to be ready with all the steam he can muster in less than no time. Yes, we're going up the river to-night on business. No, the current isn't too strong. All the same" (he soliloquised to himself, scrutinising the flood), "I wonder if we *have* got enough steam to go up-stream in this current. Lucky we kept any going at all: we shouldn't have but for wanting some to run the dynamos for our fans and lights."

"What's the joke?" inquired the Hun-Child, who here re-

[1] Native sailor.

appeared, rubbing himself immodestly with a ragged bath-towel, and looking like a dishevelled chicken.

"A stunt of sorts," replied the Policeman briefly, amid his nautical activities; "some Bengali anarchists out on the rampage. No time to explain details just now. See you later. . . . Yes, Alla Din, you can cast off as soon as you're ready."

. . . . . .

The rusty anchor-chains rattled noisily into the echoing hull, the leadsmen in the bows started their monotonous sailor chantey as they began sounding the depth of water, and then the *Vampire*, swinging out from the shelter of the shore, met the full force of the now furious current. It caught her in its embrace, and immediately whirled her two miles downstream as though she had been a child's model. Again and again the helmsman tried to bring her round head-on to the stream, and again and again her engines lacked the power to second his efforts. At last, after describing a dozen mad, half-drifting and half-steaming semicircles, her engines, now working under full pressure of steam, seemed to "bite on," and a few minutes later, after awaiting his opportunity, the helmsman finally managed to swing her bows up-stream into the current. Under the crushing strain of tons of angry water, the launch was now shaking and rattling from stem to stern, until every rivet in her ancient structure threatened to burst from its appointed place.

Her great clumsy stern-wheel was shrieking and groaning like some damned soul as it churned the boiling mill-race which swept roaring under the tortured paddles. At first the *Vampire* made no progress at all. Indeed, as the Policeman perceived by reference to the moonlit bank, they still continued to be forced downstream, though now only slowly. "Try and work her under the lee of that island," he advised the *serang*, and the latter followed the suggestion, nearly grounding on a new and uncharted sand-bank as he did so. Under the lee of the island the full force of the current was broken, and they were able to make some headway until again exposed to its full violence on the farther side. By dint of tacking between this or that island or promontory, they finally managed to make slow but steady progress up the angry river, although, as the Mohamedan engineer below remarked encouragingly from time to time, it was only Allah the Compassionate who knew how long the *injine* would hold together. The Subaltern, now clothed and in his right mind—and clasping an enormous ham-sandwich to his bosom—scrambled upon the bridge with a view to making more comprehensive professional inquiry into the nature of the local tactics employed for circumventing anarchists in cataracts. "What

are we actually supposed to be doing?" he shouted above the racket from the clanging engine-room, and the great thumping rumble of the labouring paddle-wheel.

"It's like this," the Policeman shouted back. "I've just got a wire from my boss. He's fifty miles up-stream. About a dozen chaps belonging to a particularly pestiferous secret society have slipped through his fingers, and have taken to the river. They're coming down-stream now in a native dug-out at whatever pace you like to call the current. They're almost certain to make for a certain tributary called the Bandamukhi, which joins the main stream about seven miles above us. If they get there before we do, they'll probably escape altogether, because the Bandamukhi isn't navigable for any screw- or paddle-propelled boat; it's all silted up for one thing, and bung-full up with lotuses for another."

"I see," replied the Subaltern; "but even if they do slip up this bolt-hole of theirs before we arrive, can't we still continue the movement by chasing them in our dingey?"

The Policeman shook his head tolerantly, and shouted down the speaking-tube. "No," he explained a few minutes later when he had ended his remarks on the principles of stoking, "it's no earthly good going after them once they're up the Bandamukhi. For one thing, the jungle's so dense and overhanging that you can't see more than fifty yards at a stretch, and to go on with, the stream — such as it is — splits up into a dozen minor channels, which go meandering about in all directions. You might as well look for a needle in a haystack as for a boatload of anarchists in a thousand square miles of bog, quicksand, and tiger-grass. However, if my calculations are correct, we ought to be on the spot before they are, always provided" — he hedged — "the engines stand the racket and we don't run into fog."

"Any chance of these Johnnies comin' to grief this sort of weather?" asked the Subaltern.

"No. A shallow-draught native dug-out running with the stream is as safe as houses."

"How will you spot this particular dug-out among others?"

"Because it's such a h—ll of a night that no native craft with a clear conscience will be moving about the river — at least, not voluntarily. Anyhow, bad weather narrows our search."

"Will they put up a show if we do round them up?"

"You bet," came the grim reply. "If they're the chaps we think they are, two are certain 'lifers' if caught, and a third's a hanging case; he derailed a train. The Bengali can fight when he wants to — that's to say, when he's cornered like a rat in a trap."

The Hun-Child brightened visibly. "What a joke this

all is," he said happily; "it beats Messpot all to pieces. I mean, you seldom see the stinkin' Turk within half a mile of you; but this scrap of yours ought to be a heart-to-heart sort of show—like a footer scrum." His friend smiled dryly as he eyed the swollen river ahead with dispassionate gaze. "At this rate," he remarked unsympathetically, after giving a sudden sharp command to the helmsman, "it's much more likely to resemble a burial at sea. . . . Shall we dodge that next great lump of muck all right, I wonder"—he added fatalistically—"or *not?*" That "next great lump of muck" was one of many apparent floating islands which were continually tearing past them in the moonlight on either beam. Such driftsdam was for the most part composed of mighty groves of heavy-trunked trees, uprooted wholesale by the flood, and which, with their greenery still flaunting above the surface, were being whirled rapidly seawards.

A collision—or even a graze—with the least among such formidable collections of derelict timber would have sunk the *Vampire* in thirty seconds, as the cool boy now driving his gimcrack vessel between their angry eddies knew only too well. Just a year previously he had experienced one such violent encounter afloat, and since he and two *serangs* had been the only survivors out of a crew of fifteen souls, he had not altogether forgotten the episode.

"Will your anarchist pals be decently armed?" went on the importunate Hun-Child, as unabashed he watched his friend's directions to the now frankly terrified helmsman. The tone in which his inquiry was made implied that he hoped that they would be.

"You needn't worry," replied his friend laconically. "Anyhow, they'll not be worse armed than the Government Police. My constables," he explained rather bitterly, "are only trusted with obsolete army carbines."

At that moment the look-out *serang* gave a long-drawn nasal cry in some unknown language. However, the Assistant Superintendent of Police seemed to grasp its import, for shading his eyes for a minute against the tropic moon glare, he directed the Subaltern's attention to a small black bobbing speck that stained the brilliance of the silvery water a few miles ahead. "There they are," he said briefly. "Five to one those are the chaps we want. Before their time though by my calculations. Still, as they haven't made the Bandamukhi it doesn't much matter."

The Hun-Child danced about the bridge like an agitated fox-terrier, and then rushed below to retrieve a sporting rifle.

. . . . . .

The nature of the anarchists' escape from the toils of the law up-stream had been as follows.

The Superintendent of Police—already referred to by the Assistant Superintendent as his

"boss"—becoming aware that a certain township on the river was affording a field of activity for some political malcontents, had detailed a native inspector of the Criminal Investigation Department to shadow their movements, and further to ascertain whether they were in the habit of meeting clandestinely for purposes of co-operation.

Warrants of arrest were already in existence for the more notorious among them, but to take isolated action against this or that individual meant scaring the rest of the covey away, and this was obviously impolitic if by the exercise of a little patience the whole band could be rounded up at some rendezvous. The native detective had carried out his duties most efficiently. So discreetly had he performed the task allotted him that the malcontents, although always on the look-out for police surveillance, had noticed none, and in consequence were under no apprehensions concerning their immediate safety. This being the case, they soon grew bold enough to meet together at irregular intervals and at different rendezvous. So cautiously were the arrangements for such reunions conducted that it was not until they had already forgathered three or four times that Inspector Jyotish Sen—himself a loyal Bengali—was in a position to anticipate their movements and forestall their intentions. However, his opportunity came at last, and one evening he arrived post-haste at his English superior's quarters with the welcome information that the conspirators were shortly expected to assemble at a certain little house overlooking the river. Already his C.I.D. constables—in disguise—were unostentatiously watching this quarter of the bazar, and at a word from them the regular armed police could rapidly surround the building. The whole of Jyotish's *bando-bust* was excellent, with the single exception that he omitted to send for a police-boat to picket the river itself. To do him justice, time was short and the police-boat at the other end of the town; and further, under ordinary circumstances no shipping ever anchored in the vicinity of the suspected house, and the river, of course, was far too swollen at this time of year for a man to think of escape by swimming. However, this tactical omission on the Inspector's part was to undo the hard work of a fortnight, because the anarchists—who never took any chances—had arranged a line of retreat by way of the river, engaging for this purpose a native boatman, who had orders to lie up under the bank some fifty yards away from their meeting-place. No sooner did the Superintendent of Police and his armed constables appear at the head of the street that led to the river bank, than the seditionists dashed through the garden behind the house, and shooting down the two plain-clothes policemen who were stationed there, leaped into their boat and were borne

rapidly down-stream. The evening mist was rising off the water at the time, and this enveloping them they were speedily out of sight. The birds flown, all that remained to be done was to telegraph their movements lower down the river. As the young Policeman down-stream had anticipated, their immediate intention had been to make the mouth of the Brahma Bandamukhi. That they had missed it was only due to the same fog which had in the first instance assisted their escape; and, on running into clear water again, the first thing that they saw was the *Vampire*.

"Steer past that ship at as great a distance as is possible," commanded their leader, addressing the native boatman, who sat crouched in the stern of the dug-out grasping the steering-paddle, which took the place of a rudder.

"Very good, *babu-gee*," the man replied doubtfully; "but they have only to turn, overhaul, and run us down at their pleasure."

"Cannot you lead them upon some shoal or sand-bank?" inquired the Bengali, his shrewd brain quickly adapting itself to conditions that were utterly foreign to it. "See, your boat draws but a few inches of water, and the steamer must draw many feet."

"God knows, I dare not trifle with the police," whined the fisherman, rapidly becoming terror-stricken at the prospect of an undesired conflict with the Law, to which he now seemed committed.

"Fool!" screamed the anarchist passionately, as they swept nearer the police-boat, "do something or I will kill thee!" and he thrust his automatic pistol into the trembling man's face. This proved the last straw to the boatman's nerves, for, dropping his steering-oar overboard in a panic, he flung himself prostrate at the bottom of the dug-out and cried for mercy. A second later some freak of the current had seized the rudderless barque in its grasp, and had driven it at full speed upon a partially submerged mud-flat, which at normal times probably formed part of the now flooded and almost invisible river bank. The boat having plenty of way on, was carried well home into the middle of the yielding ooze, where it stuck fast but did not capsize. All this happened—far more swiftly than it takes a pen to describe it—within a quarter of a mile of the *Vampire*, to whose crew the fate of the dug-out was plainly visible in the moonlight. The Policeman paused irresolutely for a second, for the immediate tactical situation seemed rather baffling.

"How in the name of everything riparian am I to get close up to them across all that mud?" he reflected. "I can't open fire on them until I've made certain they're the chaps we want, and not then until I've given 'em a chance of surrendering." He despatched a *serang* to fetch him the ship's megaphone with a view to hailing them, but before the man could return the anar-

chists disclosed their identity with a burst of fire from their automatic pistols. The *Vampire* was now almost opposite the stranded dug-out, and about one hundred and fifty yards away from it, the river rushing, rough, hissing, and foam-flecked, between them. The anarchists' fire was concentrated on the launch's bridge, and as the result of a lucky shot the *serang* at the wheel rolled quietly under his steering apparatus. Uncontrolled, the *Vampire* swung off her course at once, and again bade fair to become the toy of the elements. The Subaltern, however, seized the abandoned wheel and drove her bows into the current anew. At this fresh strain upon them, her indignant engines banged and rattled as though they were going to fall through her bottom.

"Wait till I get a chance of a shot back at the swine!" raged the Hun-Child, scarlet in the face between his fury and his unaccustomed labours. "Thank God, here's another lascar. . . . Here . . . take hold you . . ." and handing over the wheel to a native sailor, he ran to join the Assistant Superintendent, who was mustering his half-dozen constables amidships.

By this time—as a result of the Subaltern's saving of the situation — the steam-launch had crawled several hundred yards above the stranded dug-out, and here Fortune began to favour the representatives of the Law. The flood had scooped out a great crescent-shaped sweep of land where the bank was softest, and this had automatically resulted in the formation of a kind of promontory, where the firmer ground up-stream still stood fast. The Policeman's discriminating eye now rapidly took in the possibilities of this topographic situation, and steering the *Vampire* into the comparatively slack water below this newly-formed and natural breakwater, he cast anchor there, and waited to see how she took the strain.

Thrice they were obliged to pay out more cable, but at length the launch ceased dragging down-stream, and came to a fairly firm anchorage. "I'm pushing off in the dingey," explained the Policeman hurriedly as he strapped his revolver to his belt; "if we hug what's left of the bank we ought to be able to drift straight down on the top of those chaps. You might stop on board and look after things while I'm away."

"Be d——d if I do!" replied his frankly insubordinate special constable, and a minute later both of them fell pell-mell among the *serangs* and police sepoys in the rocking rowboat below.

Although the water under the bank had been slack enough to admit of the steam-launch anchoring there, it was —as the Hun-Child remarked tersely—"no immoral joy-ride" in the open dingey. The moment they cast off from the launch a hissing swirl carried them over the top of the flooded bank, and bore them

nearly a quarter of a mile inland. Here, however, the current becoming weaker and more erratic, the *serangs* were able to row an indirect course, which took them appreciably nearer the anarchists, who still lay below them down-stream. These latter could be seen making desperate efforts to refloat the dug-out, but it appeared to be irrevocably fixed where it had first grounded. At intervals both sides sniped each other in the moonlight, but with no effect that was apparent. Meanwhile the dingey was rowed back to a strategic point from which it seemed probable — after observing the course of minor flotsam as it passed—that the current would eventually carry them straight down upon their prey. Bidding the *serangs* ship their oars and draw their knives, the Policeman steered the little boat into the very heart of the next eddy, simultaneously announcing his intention of "letting her rip."

He let her rip, with the most astonishing results for all concerned. The dingey slipping into the eddy sprung round twice like a teetotum, and then in a flash before either friend or foe knew exactly what had happened, she had charged the dug-out broadside on, with all the accuracy and velocity of a well-directed torpedo. After that, as the Hun-Child said —borrowing metaphor from 'Alice in Wonderland'—"most things twinkled."

To describe with any degree of lucidity the varying fortunes of a life-and-death struggle which took place by moonlight in three or four feet of mud and water between the late occupants of two capsized boats is obviously no easy task. Suffice to say that the Subaltern more than once realised his ambition of a "heart-to-heart talk" with his foes. Firearms — as such — played little part in the *mêlée*, because nearly all of them were jammed with mud and thus rendered useless. The police, however, were using the butt in such cases as the collision had not parted them from their carbines. Where they had lost these weapons they drew their bayonets from their belts and stabbed; the anarchists struck back with pistol-butt, oar-blade, and in two cases with Russian sword walking-sticks. The Hun-Child was being rather badly punished by two heavily-built men, who had collared him low and dragged him down. With great promptitude he had kicked the first in the stomach when attacked, and blacked the second's eye; but having lost his rifle he was unable to inflict mortal injury upon his assailants. They for their part were attempting to use their superiority in weight and numbers to thrust his head under the mud with the object of smothering him. At one time it looked as though their efforts might be crowned with success, for the Subaltern was built on the lines of a light-weight 'chase rider rather than a wrestler, whereas both the Bengalis turned the scale at twelve or thirteen stone. For-

tunately, however, at this critical moment the Policeman managed to struggle to his assistance. Vaguely—as one sees things in a dream—the Subaltern saw his rescuer stumble towards him; but he scarcely recognised his no longer *blasé* friend in this agile shadow that leaped suddenly upon his assailants' backs, and stabbed both scientifically in swift succession with a venemous-looking *serang's* knife. "Thanks, old chap," coughed the Subaltern, half stifled by slime, but still remembering the philosophy of his Surtees: "Luvely weather for bees—ain't it?"

How long the fracas lasted it would be rash to hazard any opinion. Three anarchists managed to flounder away from the mud-flat and apparently reached the flooded mainland; but it is more than probable that they were drowned there later, because they were never heard of again, and the flood rose much higher before the night was over. Of the rest, five of the gang were unquestionably dead, and three still remained. The latter stood sullenly at bay, their backs against the wreckage of the boats; but at this juncture both sides were so exhausted by their "tangle-foot" exertions in the glutinous bog, that a brief armistice ensued automatically. The Police had their casualties, too, but they were not so heavy as the enemy's. The fact that firearms had been rendered valueless by the conditions under which the affray had taken place had not handicapped the men armed with carbines or bayonets half so much as the anarchists; for, as a class, the latter always relied on a stream of bullets from their automatics to settle the police's hash when they came into collision with them, and pistols are singularly ineffectual weapons when used for anything except their natural purpose.

The Hun-Child was the first to recover his breath during this temporary pause in the proceedings. "This," he gasped, peering through a reeking mask of mud and weed like some diminutive Father Thames, "is no sort of a job for cavalry; but hang *that!* Come on, you chaps. 'Ware corpses! Worry! worry! Tear 'um an' eat 'um!" He made smothered hunting noises, and, straddling frog-like through the squelching ooze, flung himself upon the last of the enemy. The next thing he realised was a shattering blow across the side of his head, delivered unexpectedly by a hitherto concealed life-preserver, and this was followed by a complete indifference to his immediate surroundings.

. . . . . .

Maria had watched the departure of the *Vampire* with feelings of unmitigated relief.

At the best of times she disliked all forms of work intensely; but that she should now be expected to spend her usual week-end holiday out *shikaring* with hosts who pos-

sessed no wine-cellar worth mentioning, seemed to her a positive outrage. When, therefore, a few days later, she perceived a small curl of smoke upon the horizon, she watched it with grave mistrust; and when it proved to be the *Vampire* returning on the current with the speed of a destroyer, she raised her trunk to heaven and used an expression of which any lady elephant — she *was* a lady—should have been thoroughly ashamed. The launch flashed past Maria's standings on the bank, and then turning paddled its laborious way back to its old moorings again. The Hun-Child was reclining on deck, his head swathed in bloody bandages. What his medical adviser in Mesopotamia—who had originally invalided him for shell-shock—would have thought of his patient's present idea of a rest-cure is only open to conjecture. However, notwithstanding his broken head, the Subaltern appeared in the best of spirits, as, for the twentieth time that morning, he helped his friend re-read a demi-official and guarded communication from his immediate superiors.

"They're obviously frightfully bucked with you," he was saying. "If you hadn't snaffled them, it looks as if there'd have been some dirty work with the Governor's special train next week. I bet they recommend you for the Police medal."

"As I'm given to understand," said the Policeman cynically, "that all the many obscure rewards for middle-class virtues which obtain in this country are drawn from a lucky-bag on the principle of a lottery, I don't suppose it'll make much difference whether my name's sent in or not."

"Rot!" replied the Subaltern. "Simla's not so bad as you make out; besides which the Police medal isn't an obscure thingummybob for middle-class whatsitsnames."

The *Vampire* thumped heavily against the bank and hooted her syren to express her satisfaction at her safe return, and Maria hooted back at her—for different reasons.

"Anyway," continued the Subaltern as the anchor chains dribbled out in a rumbling stream of noise, "I've had a run for my money this whack of leave. Messpot'll be tame after this blasted province of yours. On my way here the train was tipped off the line by a landslip, and nobody seemed in the least surprised; then we nearly ran over that tigress in old Morrison's car; after that, I got slung over five acres of real estate by that d—d elephant; and finally, I've ended up by being sandbagged, mudlarkin' about on an oyster-bed, with a lot of lousy black Fenians."

His host laughed apologetically. "Yes," he admitted, "I'm afraid we *are* a bit *jungli* in this part of the world. You never know what's going to happen next. We've a local proverb—'one d—d thing after another'—from an earthquake to a hurricane. To be quite candid, I'm getting a bit fed up with it myself. Still," he added more cheerfully, "I don't

expect to stick here for ever. As you know, I've applied twice for the I.A.R.O.,[1] but so far they've told me that I couldn't be spared for the army. However, I'm having another shot once the rains are over, and I may have better luck next time."

"I should have thought," replied the Cavalryman rather dryly, "that you were already earnin' your oats pretty usefully in your present stable."

"Oh, we Policemen have our uses, I suppose. Who was it called us the soldier's little brother? All the same, I feel an awful slacker messing about here doing nothing in particular in war time."

The Hun-Child giggled. "If this sort of game is your idea of slackin' about and doin' nothin'," he said, rubbing his bandaged forehead, "God forbid that I should ever meet you when you're feelin' energetic! And now," he concluded indefatigably, "let's push off on shore and give Maria some more exercise. She's lookin' as gross as a travellin' M.P. I know what *she* wants before I go back to Calcutta, and that's a real good wheelin' into line!"

---

[1] Indian Army Reserve of Officers.

ON PATROL.—VII.

A BATTLE-PRAYER.

SUBMARINES.

When the breaking wavelets pass all sparkling to the sky,
When beyond their crests we see the slender masts go by,
When the glimpses alternate in bubbles white and green,
And funnels grey against the sky show clear and fair between,
When the word is passed along—"Stern and beam and bow"—
"Action stations fore and aft—all torpedoes now!"
When the hissing tubes are still, as if with bated breath
They waited for the word to loose the silver bolts of death,
When the Watch beneath the Sea shall crown the great Desire,
And hear the coughing rush of air that greets the word to fire,
We'll ask for no advantage, Lord—but only we would pray
That they may meet this boat of ours upon their outward way.

THE BATTLE-FLEET.

The moment we have waited long
  Is closing on us fast,
When, cutting short the turret-gong,
We'll hear the Cordite's Battle-song
  That hails the Day at last.
The clashing rams come driving forth
  To meet the waiting shell,
And far away to East and North
Our targets steam to meet Thy Wrath,
  And dare the Gates of Hell.
We do not ask Thee, Lord, to-day
  To stay the sinking sun—
But hear Thy steel-clad servants pray,
And keep, O Lord, Thy mists away
  Until Thy work is done.

DESTROYERS.

Through the dark night
And the fury of battle
Pass the destroyers in showers of spray.
As the Wolf-pack to the flank of the cattle,
We shall close in on them—shadows of grey.
In from ahead,
Through shell-flashes red,
We shall come down to them, after the Day.
Whistle and crash
Of salvo and volley
Round us and into us as we attack.
Light on our target they'll flash in their folly,
Splitting our ears with the shrapnel-crack.
Fire as they will,
We'll come to them still,
Roar as they may at us—Back—Go Back!
White though the sea
To the shell-splashes foaming,
We shall be there at the death of the Hun.
Only we pray for a star in the gloaming
(Light for torpedoes and none for a gun).
Lord—of Thy Grace
Make it a race,
Over the sea with the night to run.

KLAXON.

THE MAN FROM THE CLOUDS.

BY J. STORER CLOUSTON.

PART I.

VII. AT THE MANSION-HOUSE.

As I followed the girl through the hall a man's voice asked—

"Is that O'Brien?"

"No," she said; "it's some one to see you, father."

She showed me into a room and closed the door, and in the course of the next few minutes I came to one or two pretty obvious conclusions. She was clearly Mr Rendall's daughter, and they were equally clearly in the habit of receiving visits at odd times from Mr O'Brien; in fact, they evidently concluded it was he, or Miss Rendall herself would scarcely have opened the door to me. Also, her reply might be taken as implying that if Mr O'Brien had been the visitor it would not have been her father he had come to see. But whether or no this were the true interpretation, I so thoroughly disliked and suspected O'Brien that any suggestion of intimacy was alone enough to make me glad I had started on the defensive.

"Otherwise," said I to myself, "what a charming girl to find in such a place!"

However, I reminded myself that I had not come here to be charmed, and proceeded next to take stock of the room.

It was not large, but pleasantly proportioned, low in the ceiling, and pervaded with a delicate yet distinct flavour of the past. I found myself instinctively wondering how one could reproduce this particular flavour on the stage; no armour or tapestry or any of the usual antique paraphernalia to be allowed, for beyond the thick walls and rather small windows it was so difficult to lay one's finger on any one specific thing that palpably suggested age. Finally, I decided that it was impossible to re-create such an atmosphere. It was compounded of stillness within and the glimpses of primeval quiet without, of a touch of comfortable shabbiness, of plenty of elderly books, and of a faint odour of the dampness of centuries mingled with the scent of honeysuckle. My suspicions were suddenly lulled, and with that prompt decision which has landed me in and pulled me out of so many holes, I decided to drop my German accent. That the charming Miss Rendall might miss it and wonder what had become of it was (I must confess) a reflection which did not occur to me till afterwards.

Just as I had come to this decision in walked the laird, and in two minutes I had come to another decision, which was

to adhere to the plan of campaign I had thought of as I walked, in so far as keeping my business to myself was concerned. My first impression of Mr Rendall was of height, and a certain quiet, formidable quality. He was grey-haired, with a close-clipped grizzled moustache, loose clothes as though he had shrunk a little in girth, and the unmistakable air of a man who had seen considerably more of the world than the island of Ransay. He received me quite politely and hospitably, but with every moment that passed I grew more acutely conscious of something deterrent behind his courtesy. A sense of a strong personality in the background, not actually hostile as yet, but ironic and critical, set me instinctively and instantly on guard. Not that I actually suspected the man, but to take him straightway into my confidence was simply impossible. A man of another temperament might have done so—and quite possibly have been right; but his effect on me was like tapping a limpet.

I gave him my name, and then I said in a quiet confidential way—

"Forgive this intrusion, Mr Rendall, but the fact is, my ship has evidently been called away."

I glanced towards the window, and following my look, he could see the smoke of the cruiser just visible on the horizon. He gave a little nod but said nothing.

"I was landed last night on a certain piece of business," I went on, "and it is no part of that business to make myself conspicuous, and so I have taken the liberty of coming to your house."

"You wish to wait here till your ship returns?" he inquired.

"I thought perhaps you might know of some lodging where I might remain quietly."

He smiled slightly.

"You had better stay here. There is no other lodging."

I began to thank him, but he cut me short.

"It is Hobson's choice," said he, "and my house is not overcrowded at present. Have you lunched?"

"I am afraid I haven't."

"Come and join us. My daughter and I had just sat down."

He moved towards the door.

"I have no luggage," I said.

"I can lend you what you want."

I thanked him again, and said brazenly—

"May I ask for the loan of a coat? I am anxious not to exhibit my uniform coat in the island if I can help it."

I thought he looked a trifle surprised (it must be remembered that all this time I was in a buttoned-up oilskin), but he merely nodded again and led me upstairs to a pleasant bedroom with a low ceiling and some heavy old-fashioned mahogany furniture. There he left me, and in a moment returned with a brush and comb and a tweed coat.

I had noticed that in one of the drawers there was a

key, and as I took the coat I said—

"I hope you won't think me unduly cautious if I look my uniform coat up in one of these drawers. There are certain papers in the pockets which I am bound to be careful of."

Again I fancied I caught a brief look of surprise, but it must have been brief, for his face was as inscrutable as ever as he answered—

"Do exactly as you like."

A maid came with a jug of hot water and then I was alone.

"I wonder if the man believes me?" I said to myself. "Things are going a little too dashed smoothly!"

However, there was nothing for it now but playing the game out. I first took the precaution of suddenly and quietly opening the door. There was nobody at the keyhole, so I took off my oilskin and put on the tweed coat, and then locked up the top drawer and put the key in my pocket. Hardly necessary to say that drawer remained as empty as the others.

"I call that either a very neat dodge or a devilish silly one," I said to myself. "And which it is depends entirely on the results."

As I brushed my hair I thanked my stars I was fair, for a shave was now long overdue.

"What a pirate I'd look if I were a brunette!" I thought, and as it was, the recollection of dainty Miss Rendall made me determined to borrow a razor forthwith.

I foresaw that lunch would be a function demanding considerable tact. Seeing that I had decided, rightly or wrongly (and the Lord knew which!), not to trust these people, they had to be kept in a nice equilibrium betwixt doubt and confidence. To persuade them too thoroughly that they were entertaining a genuine British naval officer would be fatal if they were treasonably inclined, and a serious mistake if they were not, for then they might reassure the other islanders and my gang would go to earth, not to be dug up again in a hurry. On the other hand, to have them too suspicious would be all right if they were treasonable, but would probably end my adventure if they were honest.

The line I selected was a blend of mystery regarding my business, breezy chat on non-committal topics, and an occasional oddity of conduct, such as might have been caused by a guilty conscience or a harmless strain of eccentricity (and I left them to make their choice).

Here are a few choice excerpts from our conversation, which I happen to remember more or less verbatim.

Myself (*chattily*). "Delightful air you have in your island! Like champagne—or perhaps in these parts I ought to say like whisky-and-soda."

Mr Rendall (*somewhat drily*). "We do happen to be acquainted with champagne."

Miss Rendall (*smiling pleasantly as she hit*). "We probably don't look as though we

were, father. Mr Merton's simile was safer."

Myself (*feeling rather an ass, but outwardly gay*). "I meant no reflection on your cellar, Miss Rendall. I was merely aiming at local colour."

At this point I fell abruptly silent, the laugh, as it were, frozen on my lips. I gazed at my plate, and then glanced furtively at my host (I was giving them their choice). The next fragment of conversation which I remember ran somewhat thus—

Myself (*leading up deliberately to the test question*). "There's one thing I envy the natives of this happy island. What a wonderful show of wild flowers they have! Do they make good grazing?"

Mr Rendall (*again drily*). "If one happens to have ruminant tastes, I believe they are edible."

Miss Rendall (*brightly, but evidently unkindly*). "Mr Merton was probably thinking chiefly of the ruminant natives."

Myself (*keeping sternly to the point*). "I was thinking chiefly of sheep. (*With a direct and steady look at the laird.*) Are there many sheep on this island?"

Mr Rendall (*quite calmly*). "A good many. Are you anxious for statistics?"

Myself (*concealing my disappointment under a brave smile*). "Oh no. Please don't mistake me for an intelligent inquirer."

I turned the brave smile on to Miss Rendall. She smiled back very slightly. In her face I seemed to read a trace of scepticism,—as if she did not quite agree with my modest estimate of myself, but at the same time thought none the better of me. I would have given a good deal to know exactly what was in her mind. Did she suspect something? And if so, what?

I had one more shot. It was an inspiration which came to me at the end of lunch when my host offered me a cigar.

"Matches?" he observed, pushing a box towards me.

Again I looked at him hard and asked—

"Have you such a thing as a *wax* match?"

His eyebrows rose slightly.

"If you prefer to light a cigar with a wax match, I daresay I can find one."

"If Mr Merton doesn't mind waiting for half an hour, perhaps I might discover a box in the storeroom," said Miss Rendall; and she added demurely, "beside the champagne."

My only consolation was that I was making an idiot of myself in a good cause.

VIII. SUNDAY.

I said good-night early that evening, and did a heap of thinking in my bedroom. Nothing that seems to me now to be worth recording had been said or done since

luncheon. I went for a solitary walk in the afternoon, as much to carry out the part of one with some business in the isle as for any other reason. It is true I actually did do some business in the way of accosting a few inhabitants and trying tactfully to convey a suspicious impression. None of them, however, had seemed in the least likely to belong to the gang I was after, and the sheep and wax-match conundrums had left them cold. I was the less concerned at this, since I had realised that the day was Saturday. To-morrow in church I meant to take stock of the islanders, and give them a chance of taking stock of me.

That night my thoughts ran chiefly on my host and hostess. I had learnt a few more facts about them, and these I now put together to see what picture they suggested. In the first place, the Rendalls were an ancient family in these parts, and had owned their property for some centuries. As all my prejudices ran in favour of old families, old port, and old furniture, this was so far reassuring.

On the other hand, Mr Rendall had apparently lived much abroad, but he dropped no hint as to whether he had sojourned in foreign parts for reasons of pleasure, health, or business. In fact he was close as a clam on the subject, and, indeed, on every other subject. Add to this that I had heard he was hard up, that he had no wife to look after him, and that he evidently took a caustic rather than an enthusiastic view of life, and in my present state of mind there seemed a *prima facie* case for suspicion. Anyhow he was a man to be watched.

As to his daughter, I had learned that her name was Jean, that she had been to school at a somewhat select seminary which I chanced to have heard of, and that she had finished her education a couple of years ago in Switzerland.

"Nothing very suspicious in all that," I thought. "Still, what is this surprising apparition doing in this out-of-the-way island? 'Looking after my father,' she'd say. But why look after him here instead of some more amusing place? Perhaps because they are hard up. On the other hand, perhaps not."

Then I thought over the pair simply as one thought of any new acquaintances before war was dreamt of, and I am bound to say they came out of the ordeal very creditably. He was well-born, well-bred, and very far from a fool. She was—well, I don't mind confessing that that night I considered her charming, in spite of the pretty obvious fact that she was not at all charmed with me. Or if she was, she concealed her feelings admirably. She had a good enough excuse, either way; whether she were honest and thought me a traitor, or whether she were treacherous and thought me honest. Besides, I had not yet shaved.

So I forgave Miss Jean her prejudice, and reflected on her attractions. I changed my mind about them later, as will appear; but that first evening she seemed to me a most piquante and dainty young lady. Slim, trim, and demure, with eyes like stars (I borrowed the simile unblushingly), and a pleasant spice of mischief in her tongue, and a touch of the devil very carefully and properly hidden away,—that was my first impression of Miss Jean Rendall.

And then I turned in, and slept that night without a dream.

Sunday was another gorgeous day. The breeze had almost quite died away, the sea glimmered through a heat-haze, and the colours of the wild flowers were brighter than any palette. I came down shaved, but found Miss Rendall still cool, and her father as inaccessible as ever.

"Anyhow," I consoled myself by reflecting, "I have eliminated my bristles as a cause for my unpopularity. They have something else on their minds!"

The laird lent me a felt hat, and as the hour of noon drew nigh we set off for the parish kirk. There was another church in the island (as in every self-respecting Scottish parish, I believe), but by the greatest good luck the rival minister was away and the congregations were assembled together. I gathered afterwards that this happy result was partly due to the hope of seeing the laird's mysterious guest, and that several very prickly theological scruples were swallowed by divers of the other congregation. At all events the church was crowded, and I had the chance I wanted.

As we approached the kirk I thought I had never seen a plainer, more primitive little building even in a Scottish kirkyard: no spire, no ornament, nothing but grey rough-cast walls (what they call in Scotland "harled") and a roof of small yellowish flagstones, set in a bed of mingled nettles and tombstones. Amid the tombstones stood the congregation, all in black and staring steadfastly at the mysterious stranger, while over the door a plaintive bell creaked and clanged.

We entered the little church, and I shall never forget my surprise. It was the year 1914 without; it became the year 1514 (or perhaps some centuries earlier still) within. On one side two minute windows pierced a wall quite four feet thick. The other wall was broken only by a great empty niche whence an image once adored had vanished. It is true there were now pews, but they were not of yesterday—square boxes, where people sat and faced in four directions, and the odour of damp Bibles smelt prehistoric.

The bell ceased clanging, the people trooped in and filled the boxes, and presently there uprose in the pulpit a grim, venerable man in black. By this time my

better feelings were under control, and I studied this figure critically. He represented one of those four "civilised" and suspect houses. One was untenanted, two I had now visited, and the fourth I was now almost ready to discharge with a cleared character. Outwardly, at least, this sedate divine suggested nothing but the austerer virtues.

For two hours the minister prayed, the minister read, and the minister preached to us; at intervals we were allowed to sing, and abused the privilege shockingly; and all the time I studied that congregation. I recognised the Scollay family — Peter elder, Peter younger, Mrs Scollay, the two rosy daughters, and even poor Jock. The three or four people I had spoken to in the afternoon were all there too. In fact I saw every one I had consciously met before in that island, with three exceptions. The doctor and O'Brien were not in church, and, narrowly though I looked, I saw no sign of the ancient with tinted spectacles and a taste for wax matches.

I very soon was made aware that there was no fear of myself going unobserved. At one time or another I caught every eye in that congregation riveted on me, and it only remained for me to give the proper impression to carry away with them.

As I was unable to see myself as others saw me, I cannot say precisely what effect I produced; but if a habit of looking suddenly and guiltily at the floor when I caught a hard-staring eye, a conspicuous difficulty in following the order of the service and knowing what book to be picked up, and whether to kneel, sit, or stand, and a peculiarly unpleasant shake which I introduced into my top note — if all these manifestations failed to convey the impression that I was a very suspicious person indeed, well, all I can say is that they ought to have, and that that congregation must have been singularly deficient in the proper kind of imagination. Of course I could hardly expect a sympathetic signal to be actually made in church, but I did hope my performance would surely bear fruit before many hours had passed.

At last the service ended, the commons crowded out, and the laird and his daughter rose in their wake and greeted the minister on their way to the door. I noticed that they did not introduce me, and also that the Reverend Mr Mackenzie regarded me—over Miss Rendall's shoulder—with a sternly suspicious glance. Evidently he had heard ill of me already, and hope burned higher. If the minister had heard dark rumours, surely the spies had! Or anyhow they would when that congregation had all reached their homes (if they were not among the congregation themselves).

We passed again through many eyes in the kirkyard, and then the Rev. Mr Mackenzie and the laird walked together

for a short way, and I found myself alone with Miss Jean.

"I didn't see Dr Rendall or Mr O'Brien in church," I remarked.

"They very seldom come to church," said she.

"I gather that Mr O'Brien is visiting the doctor," I observed.

"Yes," said she in a tone that promised little further information.

"Has he been staying with him long?" I persevered.

"For some time."

"Old friends, I suppose."

She did not seem to hear me, and I gave it up—in the meanwhile; but to myself I said complacently—

"Some mystery here!"

Presently I remarked—

"There was another face I didn't see—the island patriarch."

She looked at me quickly.

"The patriarch—who do you mean?"

"An old gentleman with a white beard, tinted spectacles, and overcoat somewhat the worse for wear. He hailed me on the road yesterday and asked for a match. I imagine he must live somewhere near the doctor's house."

She looked very thoughtful for a moment and then said—

"There is no one in the island with tinted spectacles, and nobody in the least like that living anywhere near Dr Rendall's."

I looked at her sharply.

"Are you quite sure?"

She seemed to think again for a moment, and then said—

"Perfectly."

I had something to think about on my way home to lunch.

IX. AN ALLY.

After lunch I set out by myself with pretty high hopes. It seemed to me inconceivable that men (or even one man, for the sake of argument, though I felt sure there must be more) who were lurking here on the business this gang were engaged upon would actually take no steps one way or the other to deal with a stranger who knew of their existence, and who to all seeming was one of their own kidney. I flattered myself by this time that every report they could have heard and every observation they might have made must incline them to the view that it was their duty to get in touch with me again. And now I proposed to take a solitary ramble along the very shore where I had stumbled upon my oilskinned friend and give them a chance of getting in touch.

It was an afternoon of sunshine and gleaming seas. At first the air was redolent of clover, and then—as I drew near the shore—of sea-ware. On this day of rest there was hardly any one to be seen about, so that a quiet meeting by the beach could be simply arranged. Only a meeting implies two, and though I walked right along the coast till I got within a stone's-throw of the Scollays'

farm, I remained as solitary as when I started.

I turned back, and slowly retraced my steps for a mile or so, my hopes fading and my perplexity increasing.

"What ought I to have done that I haven't done?" I asked myself. "And what have I done that I oughtn't to?"

I paused and sat down on the crisp sea turf with a rough stone wall to landward, and below me the shelving rocks and the glassy ocean; and it was then the idea struck me that I might do something to attract attention to my presence. A thoughtful aunt had presented me with a revolver when I got my commission, and as anything to do with hitting things, from cricket-balls to pheasants, has always amused me, I used to carry it in my hip-pocket regardless of chaff (one happily inspired wag dubbed me "Jolly Roger"). I took it out now, descended to the beach, set up a stone as a mark, and proceeded to combine business with pleasure by doing a little fancy shooting. The thing made just enough noise to attract anybody fairly near at hand without scandalising the inhabitants, and as I chanced to be in good form, I quite enjoyed myself.

I had just brought off a pretty sequence of snapshots, and was thinking regretfully that in one of the happy lands which still encouraged the duel I should be a much more respected member of society, when I suddenly realised that I had a spectator of my prowess. He was standing on the turf above me, a little indistinct owing to the wall at his back, and for an instant my heart leapt, and I thought I had met the friend I was seeking at last. And then I saw that it was only poor Jock.

I waved to him, and he came scrambling down to the beach, his mouth wide open as usual and wreathed in smiles. As he approached, a wild thought struck me. He was bearded, thick-set, and of medium height. Wrap him in an oilskin, and there you were! I mention all my inspirations to shew that I really did cover the ground pretty thoroughly in that island. It is true that the conduct of my oilskinned acquaintance was scarcely that of a congenital idiot; still, I was resolved to leave no stone unturned.

"Shoots, shoots!" he babbled in his curious thick voice. "Jock heard shoots!"

I looked at him fixedly, and in a serious voice and a German accent you could have cut with a knife replied—

"I vant to know zomezing about sheeps, Herr Jock, not about shoots. How many sheeps are zere in zis island, eh?"

Did I see a gleam of intelligence for an instant in Jock's eye? I cannot honestly say. I only know that he looked not unnaturally surprised, and then thickly answered what sounded like "A hundred and six." Anyhow, it was nothing

that seemed to illuminate the subject.

"And how many wax matches?" I inquired.

Jock hooted with laughter. He sounded so cheerful that I perforce laughed too, and then I gazed at him sombrely.

"Jock," I said, "you are a fraud and a disappointment."

He laughed again, and then all at once a much more sensible idea struck me. He was not a very promising ally, but he might prove better than none at all.

"Jock," said I, "I am a stranger."

He nodded, and seemed to understand.

"Have you seen any other strangers in this island of yours?" I asked.

He seemed a little confused.

"No, no," he began, and then altered it into "Yes, yes."

Which did he mean, or did he mean anything at all?

"A man in an oilskin coat, with a moustache on his lip—here," I went on, touching my own lip, "who goes out at night and walks along the shore; have you seen any one like that?"

Again he seemed to look intelligent, but he only shook his head vaguely.

"Well," I said, "if you do see any one like that let me know, and you will see some more shoots. Also, I shall give you this."

I held up a new half-crown, and he laughed so joyfully that I began to have a faint hope he might prove of some use after all.

And yet when I had left him and resumed my walk back to the Rendalls' house, my spirits were not very high. As an ally Jock did not impress me with a feeling of great confidence, while his failure to recognise my description of the oilskinned man depressed me unreasonably. I told myself that the opinion of the parish idiot on the subject of strangers was of small value. Besides, quite likely the oilskinned man would not be a stranger to the people in the neighbourhood. They might know him familiarly as a prosperous farmer, or a hardy fisherman —or as their own doctor, or their doctor's guest, or—no, he could not be their laird, for Mr Rendall was too tall. In short, my talk with Jock had proved nothing one way or the other.

And yet my whole failure to come upon any trace of the gang, in spite of all my ingenuity, did set me thinking. Could it possibly be that my entire adventure had been a hallucination? I confessed frankly to myself that I have a pretty lively imagination, and I recalled vividly how I had almost collapsed on my way to the Scollays under the strain of an intense reaction, how my brain had whirled, and how I peopled the farm kitchen with full thrice the number of persons actually assembled. I had been conscious of all that; but supposing my brain had actually begun to whirl half an hour sooner, before I had become conscious of it? Might I not

have imagined my whole mysterious adventure?

It was a nasty thought, for in that case what a superfluous fool I had made of myself since! But I faced it manfully, and sternly asked myself what the opinion of the average hard-headed, soberly-reasoning man would be if he were given the facts, and requested to pronounce his verdict on them. What would be my own verdict if I were told such a yarn? Would I swallow it without demur?

"Be hanged if I would!" I said candidly.

By the time I got back to the big house, I had very nearly ceased to believe in the tale myself.

X. THE COAST PATROL.

That evening we were all three sitting in the library (the same old-world room into which I had first been shown), when a servant entered and gave a message to Mr Rendall. He rose and went out, leaving his daughter and myself each apparently immersed in a book. She may genuinely have been, but I was making the covers of mine a screen for inward debate. Had I made a mere fool of myself, and should I make a clean breast of everything to my hosts? Or should I wait a little longer before deciding? I went on thinking after the laird had left the room, and Miss Jean still kept her eyes immovably on her page. I frankly confess I have never cut less ice with any woman — especially one who decidedly attracted me.

In a few minutes her father returned, and said to her—

"John Howieson has cried off to-night. I must go myself."

She started up with a word of expostulation, but he merely smiled in his grim way, nodded at her (not at me, I noticed), and was gone. With a little sigh she sat down again and plunged into her book, but my curiosity had been roused, and in a moment I inquired—

"Is your father going out for long?"

Her concern seemed to have broken down her reticence.

"All night," she said. "I wish he wouldn't!"

"What's the matter?" I asked.

"The coast patrol," said she.

"The coast patrol!" I exclaimed. "What's that?"

She seemed to look at me for an instant a little doubtfully before she answered.

"The Admiralty have asked all the Justices of Peace to have the coast patrolled."

"By whom?"

"Anybody they can get. We have the whole island mapped out into beats, and the different farmers take it night about."

For the moment I only half believed her. Such an amateur way of keeping watch and ward in such a vital area seemed hardly credible, but I learned afterwards that in

those early days of the war that was one of the things which actually happened. Another fact also made me doubtful. On the night I landed I had met no watchers.

"Who watches the shore up at the north end—near the Scollays' farm?" I asked.

"Oh, Dr Rendall and Mr O'Brien look after that beat," said she.

In a flash my belief in my own adventure had begun to return. Either that couple neglected their duty—or I had met one of the watchers!

"Do the doctor and Mr O'Brien ever go out themselves—like your father to-night?" I asked.

"Mr O'Brien goes out pretty often, I believe."

I thought for a moment longer, and then I jumped up.

"This seems the very job for an able-bodied young man," I said with a laugh. "I'm going out to join the watchers!"

"You!" she exclaimed, springing up too.

I looked her straight in the eye.

"Why not me?" I inquired.

She said nothing for an instant, and then she remarked in quite a matter-of-fact voice—

"Very well; if you are going, I'll come with you."

I could not resist parodying her.

"You!" I exclaimed.

But I got no smile in response.

"I'll be ready in five minutes," she said as she left the room.

"Now, what the devil does this mean?" I said to myself.

Five minutes of course meant quarter of an hour, and then we sallied forth into the night, she in a long tweed coat and I in my inevitable oilskin.

"Which way do you want to go?" she asked.

"Suppose we work our way towards the north end," I suggested.

She said nothing more, and we made our way by a track to the shore, and then turned towards the left. I had been filling my pipe, and when we got to the last stone wall I stopped, bent under its shelter, and struck a match. My face was towards her, and in the fraction of a second before the first match blew out I caught the glimpse of something just visible in the mouth of one of the big pockets of her tweed coat. It was the butt-end of a pistol.

I struck three more matches before I got my pipe alight, and I contrived to face her each time, but she had turned and kept her other side towards me. When we resumed our walk I noticed that she consistently kept two or three yards away from me.

"Just shooting distance!" I said to myself.

"By the way, what are we supposed to be looking for?" I inquired presently.

"Chiefly periscopes, I think," said she.

I stopped short and gazed over the inky sea.

"Do they light them up for us?" I asked.

She laughed despite herself.

"That is what I've been wondering myself," said she.

This was her only sympathetic relapse, and, to tell the truth, I made no further remark worthy of being smiled at. That pistol kept me thinking. That she had come out to watch me, and if necessary shoot me, seemed a pretty obvious deduction, and, much as I admired her nerve, it made humorous conversation a trifle difficult.

On we walked—on and on for what seemed an interminable distance. It was quite moonless, and only a few stars twinkled here and there through a veil of light clouds that had drifted up with the sunset. The grass underfoot was black, the sea was nearly as dark, and the inland country invisible. Once I remarked—

"It's a curious thing that we haven't met any of our fellow-watchers."

"The beats are very long," she said, "and I'm afraid all the watchers don't keep at their posts all the time."

"What! they take a nap now and then?"

She seemed as though she were going to agree, and then to change her mind.

"Oh, we shall meet some one very soon. I think father is taking this beat."

But we met no one, and as we pursued our lonely way I began to think that here was quite a possible reason for my not having come upon one of these coast patrols two nights ago. Still, it was only a possible reason; the other alternative remained.

And then, I know not how it was, but I began gradually to get a curious impression that *something* was in the air, *something* was going to happen. It is easy to say I only imagine now in the retrospect that I had this feeling. But I noted the sensation clearly and positively at the time. I strained my eyes, I looked this way and that, so strong did the feeling become. Once I thought for a moment I heard soft footsteps somewhere on the inland side, and I stopped short then and listened; but when I stopped I heard nothing.

It can only have been a few minutes after this that the figure at my side (which had been so silent that I had almost forgotten it was a girl, and a pretty girl too) stopped suddenly, and I stood still beside her.

"Do you hear anything?" she asked, and there seemed to be a little catch in her breath.

I listened, and shook my head. I could see that she was gazing intently down at the beach.

"Do you see anything?" I asked in a voice instinctively hushed.

"No," she answered in the same low tone, "but I thought I heard something."

Again I strained my ears, and this time I distinctly did

hear something; it might have been a movement among the rocks below or on the bank ahead of us. She said nothing more, but she seemed to be peering down into the gloom that veiled the beach.

"I'll go down and see what it is," I said.

For an instant I thought she was going to demur; but she said nothing, and with a bold air I stepped off the turf and began to make my way down — first through loose boulders, and then along a ledge below. I confess frankly that I felt a trifle less bold than I looked, especially when I discovered the hazardous nature of the going. I remember that the sky began to seem lighter by contrast, but that the rocks were sheer chaotic darkness.

I must have been feeling my way along for some minutes, with a growing sense of the futility of the performance, when I first heard the sharp tinkle of a loose stone on rock. I turned towards the sound and heard it again. Either three or four times I had heard it distinctly when I found myself close to the grass again, only at this place there was a steep little cliff, higher than my head, between it and me, instead of a slope of boulders, so that any one on the bank above would be looking straight down on to me. All this I can swear to.

And then when my shoulder was rubbing this low cliff face, I thought—indeed I am sure—I heard something move above, and certainly there was a sharp grating sound on the rock at my back—within an inch of me it seemed. I looked round quickly just in time to catch a glimpse of something thin and curved and sinister passing upwards against the night sky; I did not see it descend again, but the next moment came the sharp grating, close to my head this time, and once more the long curved menace passed up, faintly visible against the sky.

I did not wait for it to descend again. That somebody was striking at me from above, and that I had better get out of the way, seemed so evident that I spent no further time in watching the operation. I started from the cliff, my feet struck a patch of seaweed, and with a half-smothered "Damn!" I did the next few yards sliding seawards on my side. A peculiarly hard ledge stopped my career, and for a moment I lay there wondering what bones were broken. By the time I had found there were none and scrambled to my feet the skyline above the bank was clear. Whoever had struck at me was gone, and there was not even the slightest sound save the gurgling of the sea below. And then I gingerly picked my way back.

I drew near the turf bank at the top, and now again I stopped. Low voices reached my ear distinctly, and presently I spied two vague forms standing close together. Before I moved again I had transferred something from my hip pocket

to my oilskin jacket, and I kept my hand there too, closed upon it and ready. Then I advanced.

"Is that you, Mr Merton?" said a voice I knew.

"It is, Mr Rendall," I answered drily.

"Did you see anybody?"

"No," I answered truthfully.

"We thought we heard a cry," said Miss Jean.

"I may have startled a seagull," I suggested; and then I asked with a sharpness in my voice I could not quite control, "Where did Mr Rendall spring from?"

"I told you I thought we should meet him," she answered, with a cool note in her voice that countered mine.

"What a curious chance that we should all meet here!" I exclaimed.

"It is precisely what I expected," said she.

"Did you think, then, it was Mr Rendall down among the rocks?" I inquired.

"No," she said, "and it wasn't."

"Oh," I replied in a tone which (if I achieved my intention) might have meant anything—or nothing.

Her father had been standing perfectly silent during this bout, a towering figure muffled in a heavy ulster and scarf, with the rim of his hat turned down over his face. Now he spoke in his dry caustic way.

"Have you had enough exercise, Mr Merton?"

"Quite, thank you."

"Then we can all go back together."

He turned, and his daughter took his arm. I walked behind them—it seemed on the whole safer—and I kept my hand in my pocket all the while.

I had seen no one, it is true; I had heard no sound that could be sworn to as made by a human being; the thing I saw so dimly might possibly not have been a lethal weapon (and if it was a weapon, what in heaven's name could it be? I wondered); it might conceivably have been a large bird some distance off, just as by a reverse illusion men are said to have fired at bumble-bees when grouse-driving. Also, it was within the bounds of possibility that the tinkling stones might not have been thrown down by some one above in order to draw me under that face. Everything had been so vague that all these alternatives were conceivable.

But my own mind was quite and finally determined now that my adventure with the stranger on the shore had been no figment of my fancy, and I felt sure, moreover, that *they* had made up their minds about me and decided to act. How and why they had come to such a definite conclusion, despite all my efforts to mislead them, beat me at first completely. And then I stopped short, and almost shouted "Idiot!"

I had addressed Miss Rendall at her own door in a German accent. Then I had abruptly dropped it, and

through all my deliberate mystifications one fact had been clear — that I spoke in the accents of an ordinary more or less educated Englishman. The Rendalls clearly had the material for coming to a conclusion, and now in their company I had all but ended my days on earth.

Yet somehow or other, now that I saw all this so clearly, I found myself singularly reluctant to accept the logical conclusion that this gentleman of good lineage and standing, and this attractive high-spirited girl, were actually traitors of the basest sort, and murderous traitors too.

"Hang it, I may be wrong after all!" I said to myself. "I know I'm young: I am told I'm rash; I have made a fool of myself periodically as long as I've known myself. I'll give them the benefit of the doubt a little longer."

At the door Mr Rendall left us to resume his conscientious patrol. I said a brief and cool good-night to Jean, went up to my room, and tumbled straight into bed.

"In the morning I'll think things over," I decided.

(*To be continued.*)

"USQUE AB OVO."

BY "BARTIMEUS."

REMINISCENCES of those days "in the distance enchanted" never come in an orderly procession according to the original sequence of events. Some, for reasons quite inexplicable, jostle their way to the fore readily enough. Others, dim and elusive, hover in the background, and only respond to the lure of firelight and tobacco smoke ascending incensewise from the depths of the armchair.

Sooner or later, though, they can all be caught and held for the moment needed to record them. The difficulty is to know where to start. . . .

Harker is foremost among the "thrusters" in the surging crowd of memories of the old *Britannia* days. Harker, with his piercing, rather melancholy eyes, his black beard and tattooed wrists, and his air of implacable ferocity that for months succeeded in concealing from his term a heart as tender as a woman's.

His name was not actually Harker, of course; but he is probably still alive, and even retired chief petty officers of the Royal Navy have their susceptibilities. He was a term C.P.O. — mentor, wet-nurse, "sea-daddy," the outward and visible embodiment of Naval Discipline to sixty-odd Naval Cadets who yesterday were raw schoolboys and to-day wear the King's uniform and eke brass buttons—a transition unhinging enough to more matured souls than those of his charges.

How he succeeded in conveying within the space of the first evening the exceedingly unfamiliar routine of training-ship life, the art of turning into a hammock, the necessity for keeping their chests locked, the majesty of the term lieutenant, and the omnipotence of the chief cadet captains, to sixty bewildered fifteen-year-olds, only he knows.

Yet he harried none; they were conscious of him as a flock of disconcerted sheep are aware of a wise collie. His voice was never still: it was to be presumed that he slept at some mysterious time during the twenty-four hours, and yet his square compact form seemed to be always drifting about at all hours of the day and night. Even when a hapless wight (in the throes of nightmare) tipped bodily out of his hammock on to the deck during the first night, it was Harker who appeared noiselessly out of the shadows to tuck him in again.

Their names he had pat within twenty-four hours; this tightened his grip of the term instantly, but it also caused him to be regarded as scarcely canny. Indeed it was disconcerting enough to regard yourself one moment as an insignificant and unknown unit among 250 others, and in this

comfortable reflection to lean in a *dégagé* attitude against the white paint-work (one of the seven deadly sins): then to hear admonition and your name, coupled together like chain-shot, ring out along the crowded main deck. Harker had seen you.

There were other C.P.O.'s on board: each term owned one. But they were, by comparison with Harker, sorry fellows. One, in a scarlet jersey, was reputed to be given to beating the big drum at Salvation Army meetings ashore. Hotly his term denied it, but the story was stamped with the unimpeachable authority of the boatswain's mate of the lower deck: a godless seaman, conversation with whom, being of a spicy and anecdotal nature, was forbidden.

Another was admittedly of a good enough heart, but a sentimentalist, and consequently to be despised. On the occasion of the chastisement of an evil-door, his was the arm chosen to administer the strokes with all the pomp and circumstance of an official execution. He laid the strokes on well and truly—that much the victim himself admitted. But when he turned from his duty his eyes were observed to have tears in them. His term had in consequence to adopt an apologetic manner for a considerable time afterwards.

It was a similar scene, but one in which Harker played the Lord High Executioner, that must here be recorded. The setting alone was sufficient to strike awe and even terror into the spectators' hearts. And now, after the lapse of years, recalling the circumstances of that harrowing quarter of an hour, it is doubtful whether there was not just some such motive behind the grim circumstance that led up to the painful consummation.

The scene was the orlop deck. What light there was came in through the open gun-ports, slanting upwards off the water. Not cheering sunlight, you understand, but a greenish sickly gleam that struggled ineffectually with the shadows clinging like vampires among the low oak beams overhead.

The victim's term were fallen-in in a hollow square about the horse—a block of wood supported on short legs with ring-bolts and canvas straps hanging from each corner. Then there came a pause. Possibly the captain had not finished his breakfast; or perhaps Harker had for once made a mistake and got his term there too early. But for the space of several minutes (or weeks, or years) the term stood in shuddering contemplation of this engine.

Then one of the spectators, the victim of either an over-rich imagination or an acutely sensitive conscience, dramatically fainted and was borne forth. After that things began to happen. The malefactor appeared, accompanied by Harker. The captain, the term lieutenant, and (a thrill ran through the onlookers) the

surgeon followed. It was half expected that the chaplain would also join the group and administer ghostly consolation to the culprit, who, it must be reluctantly admitted, looked rather pleased with himself.

His offence was not one to alienate him from the hearts of his fellows. If memory serves aright, he had been overheard to refer to his late crammer in terms that may or may not have been just, but were certainly not the way a little gentleman should talk. But his term—or most of them—were still smarting under the recollections of crammers' methods, and were disposed to regard the delinquent's lapse rather more as a pardonable ebullition of feeling than a breach of morality. In short, he was a bit of a hero.

"Chief Petty Officer Harker," said the stern voice of the term lieutenant, "do your duty." The harrowing preliminaries completed, Chief Petty Officer Harker did it, as was to be expected of him, uncommonly well.

The victim took it, as was also to be expected of him, uncommonly well. It was not long before these lines were written that he was called upon to meet a sterner and his last ordeal. The pity is that no spectator can bear testimony to the worthier courage with which he must have met it.

Harker it was who smelt out, like a Zulu witch-doctor, the grass snake and dormouse that lived a life of communistic ease and reflection in the washing till of some one's sea-chest. Harker's the suspicious mind that led to official ruxes of private tills, and the confiscation of meerschaum pipes, Turkish cigarettes, and other contraband. Yet all this without any effect of espionage.

The nearest approach to active espionage that Harker permitted himself was hovering in the vicinity of the gangway when the terms were landed for daily recreation. The law of the Medes and Persians had it that during cold weather all cadets not playing games must land wearing a particularly despicable form of under-garment: a woolly and tucked-into-the-socks abomination that the soul of every right-minded cadet revolted from. As the procession passed under the low gangway on its way to the launches alongside, Harker, lurking in the vicinity, would suddenly pounce upon a suspect.

"'Ave we got our DRAWERS on, Mr So-and-So?" came the merciless query. The progress of the procession was arrested while Mr So-and-So racked his brains for some suitable parry to this very leading question. A damning negative having eventually been extorted, the underclad one was hauled from the ranks and given three minutes in which to get to his chest, extract from his wardrobe the garment that found such high favour in Olympian eyes, put it on, and rejoin the tail of the procession. Thus a first offender: a second offence

resulted in "no landing." There was no appeal.

The muddy, tired, ever-hungry throng that returned some three hours later, again passed on board under this lynx-eyed surveillance. This time illicit "stodge" was the subject of Harker's unquenchable suspicions.

Smuggling stodge on board (another of the seven deadly sins) required considerable ingenuity, owing to the ban the authorities thought necessary to impose on pockets. Regular outfitters pandered to this Olympian whim, and constructed trousers with an embryonic fob just large enough to hold a few coins. The unorthodox, who arrived with garments bearing the stamp of provincialism and pockets, were bidden to surrender them forthwith, and stout fingers ruthlessly sewed them up.

The jacket had only one, a breast pocket already congested by keys, handkerchief, letters from home, pet bits of indiarubber, and the like. Remained therefore the despised garment already alluded to. This, being tucked—by official decree—into the wearer's socks, formed an admirable hold-all for a packet of butter-scotch—worked flat—a snack of Turkish Delight, or a peculiar and highly favoured form of delicacy known as "My Queen."

With a not too saintly expression, an unflinching eye, and a sufficiently baggy pair of trousers, the contrabandist might count on a reasonable amount of success. But Harker's X-ray glance rarely failed him.

That stern incisive voice would rivet all eyes upon the culprit just when the muster by the officer of the day had been completed, and the long ranks awaited the stentorian dismissal of the chief cadet captain.

"Mr Z! You'll step along to the sick-bay when we falls out."

The blanched smuggler clutched at his momentarily abandoned halo of rectitude.

"Sick-bay!" he echoed indignantly. "Why the sick-bay? There's nothing wrong with me—I swear there isn't. I never felt better in my life."

"That there nasty swelling on your shin," was the pitiless reply, "did ought to be seen to at once." A draught, that had fluttered the carefully selected baggy trousers against their wearer's legs, had been his undoing. The game was up.

Like all truly great men, Harker could unbend without discipline suffering an iota. As the months passed and his term of fledgling "News" acquired the modest dignity of "Threes" (second term cadets), Harker's methods changed. He was no longer the detective, inquisitor, encyclopædia of a thousand unfamiliar phrases, events, and objects. His term were on their feet now, treading in their turn paths fiercely illumined by the new first term's gaping admiration and curiosity. They were an example.

"'Ow long 'ave we been in

the *Britannia?*" he would demand reproachfully when some breach of the laws called for reproof. "'Ere we are in our second term, an' talkin' about HUP-STAIRS!"

The scorn in his voice was like a whip-lash.

"When you young gentlemen goes to sea you won't find no STAIRS!"

When they went to sea! That was the gradually increasing burden of his song. For a while it presented a picture too remote almost for serious contemplation. It was practically a figure of speech, meaningless. But as time went on, and the successive dignities of "Sixer" and "Niner" (third and fourth—the last—terms) loomed up and passed into reality, and at last the Great Wall of the final examination alone stood between them and the sea-going gunrooms of the Fleet, the words took on their real significance.

Harker abandoned even sarcasm. He became guide, philosopher, and friend, a patient mentor always accessible—generally somewhere on the chest-deck—in leisure hours to thirsters after knowledge. Was one shaky in that branch of nautical lore known as "Bends and Hitches"? Harker's blunt fingers tirelessly manipulated the end of a hammock-lashing until the pupil could make even a "sheep-shank" with his eyes shut.

Another would bring him, in a welter of grease and ravelled strands, a tortured mass of hemp-rope.

"It's meant to be a Long Splice," was the explanation, "but I don't seem to get it right—ever," and with a despondent sigh it would be thrust into Harker's hands.

Harker would examine the interwoven strands, twisting them to and fro with jerks of his powerful wrists, pulling taut here, tucking something in there, and lo! the thing took shape.

"This is where you goes wrong, Mr P., every time!" (Recollect there were sixty-odd in his term.) "Don't forget what I'm always telling you. You splits the middle strands, and then an over-'and knot in the opposite 'alves . . ." It always looked so easy when Harker did it.

It was during the last night on board that Harker rose to heights truly magnanimous. The fourth term regarded it as its right and privilege, on the last night of the term, to hold high carnival until sleep overtook them. Cadet captains even cast their responsibilities to the winds that night and scampered about, slim pyjama-clad figures, in the dim light of the lanterns, ruthlessly cutting down the prig who yearned for slumber, lashing up a victim in his hammock and leaving him upside-down to reflect on certain deeds of the past year that earned him this retribution, floating about on gratings on the surface of the plunge-baths, and generally celebrating in a fitting manner the eve of the day that was to herald in new responsibilities and cares.

Harker, who for fifteen months had haunted the shadows on the look-out for just such a "rux," whose ear caught every illicit sound—even the crunch of the nocturnal butter-scotch—Harker was for once unseeing and unseen. It needed but this crowning act of grace to endear him for ever to his departing flock.

Yet he had one more card to play, and played it as he passed in farewell from carriage to carriage of the departing train. Further, he dealt it with accentuated emphasis for the benefit of those he thought needed the reminder most.

"Gosh!" ejaculated such an one when Harker passed to the next carriage: he flopped back on to his seat. "Did you hear? He said 'Sir' to each one of us when he said good-bye!"

So much for Harker. But he brought with him a number of other memories entangled somehow about his personality, and on these it may be as well to enlarge a little ere they slip back into the limbo of the forgotten past.

It says much for the vividness of Harker's personality that he outran in these reminiscences the memory of "Stodge." Certainly few interests loomed larger on the horizon of these days than the contents of the two canteens ashore.

There was one adjacent to the landing-place: a wise forethought of the authorities, enabling a fellow to stay his stomach during the long climb from the river to the playing-fields, where the principal canteen stood.

"Stodge" was of a surpassing cheapness. That much was essential when the extent of the weekly pocket-money was limited (if memory is to be trusted) to one shilling. Further, it was of a pleasing variety, certain peculiar combinations, hallowed by tradition, being alone unchanging.

Of these the most popular was the "Garry Sandwich." Components: a half-stick of chocolate-cream sandwiched between two "squashed-fly" biscuits; the whole beaten thin with a cricket-bat, gymnasium shoe, or other implement handy. The peculiarity of this particular form of dainty was that it sufficed as an unfailing bribe wherewith to open negotiations with one Dunn, the septuagenarian keeper of the boat-house. The moral atmosphere of this haunt, in consequence of its custodian's sweetness of tooth, came in time to resemble that of a Chinese yamen.

Another delicacy, about which legend clustered, was the "Ship's Bun," split in half, with a liberal cementing of Devonshire cream and strawberry-jam oozing out at the sides. Concerning the bun itself, the maternal solicitude of the authorities extended one gratis to each cadet ashore on half-holidays, lest the impecunious should hunger unnecessarily between lunch and tea. The buns were obtainable on application at the counter, whence the daughter

of the proprietor — whom we will call Maunder—was charged with the duty of issuing them.

How she pretended to remember the two and a half hundred faces that presented themselves in surging crowds round the counter at 4 P.M., is more than her present recorder can say. But even as she extended a bun to the outstretched grubby hand of a suppliant, an expression of vixen-like indignation and cunning would transform her features.

"You've 'ad a bun afore!" she would snap shrilly, withdrawing the bounty in the nick of time. The hungry petitioner, cheerfully acknowledging defeat in a game of bluff, would then withdraw, pursued by Miss Maunder's invectives.

All the same she was not infallible, and on occasions hot protestations and even mutual recrimination rang to and fro across the counter. Appeal, ultimately carried to Mr Maunder, was treated in much the same way as it is by croupiers at Monte Carlo. A gentleman's word is his word. But it is as well not to be the victim of too many mistakes.

Maunder, who was occupied with the stern responsibility of catering for the whim of the rich, had a way of recapitulating the orders from the beginning, adding up aloud as the count went on, thus:—

Cadet. A strawberry ice, please, Maunder.

Maunder. One strawberry ice tuppence.

Cadet. Oh, and a doughnut, while you're about it.

Maunder. One strawberry ice one doughnut thruppence.

Cadet. That's just to go on with. Then in a bag I want a stick of cream chocolate.

Maunder. One strawberry ice, one doughnut, one stick cream chocolate, fourpence.

Cadet (breathlessly). And a bottle of barley-sugar and a "My Queen," and four Garry biscuits, and half a pound of cherries and a bottle of lemonade, and one of ginger-beer and—that's all, I think.

Maunder (coming in a little behind, chanting, the general effect being that of a duet in cannon). One strawberry ice, one doughnut, one stick cream-chocolate, one bottle barley-sugar, one "My Queen," &c., &c., &c. . . . And a bag one an' thruppence 'a'penny. . . . Thank you, sir. Next, please.

On occasion demigods walked among the children of men. The visits of the Channel Fleet to Torbay usually brought over one or two of a lately departed term, now midshipmen by the grace of God, and magnificent beyond conception.

It was their pleasure, these immaculately-clad visitors, to enter the canteen, greet Maunder with easy familiarity, and Miss Maunder with something approaching gallantry, slap down a sovereign on the counter, and cry free stodge all round. They would even unbend further, dallying with a strawberry-ice in token of their willingness to be as other men, and finally depart

in a cloud of cigarette-smoke and hero-worship.

This record is not concerned with the fact that on their return on board their ship some hours later, one suffered stripes for having forgotten to lock his chest before he went ashore, and the other, being the most junior of all the junior midshipmen, was bidden swiftly to unlace the sub's boots and fetch his slippers.

To every dog his day.

. . . . . .

Random memories such as these necessarily present individuals and incidents, not in the sequence of their importance in the cosmos as one sees it now, but as they appeared to the vision of the Naval Cadet, whose world was an amiable Chaos.

Thus the Captain flickers through this kaleidoscope, an awesome bearded figure, infinitely remote from the small affairs of that teeming rabbit-warren of youth.

More readily comes to mind the picture of his lady wife, white-haired, with clear eyes and gentle voice, a memory somehow entangled with geraniums in red pots about the high-moulded stern-gallery, and tea on Sunday afternoons in the spacious chintz-draped after-cabin; with irksome football sprains and brief puerile illnesses made more endurable by her visits to the cotside.

The Commander, though less awesome than the Captain, approached the mortal in that he stooped at times to wrath. His was the cold eye before which the more hardened malefactors quailed, his the rasping voice that jerked the four terms to attention at Divisions each morning—

"Young gentlemen, 'shun!"

The English public schoolboy is conscious of youth, and takes the fact of being a gentleman for granted. But to hear himself addressed by a designation that combined both qualities was a never-staling subject for inward mirth and a weird self-congratulation difficult of analysis. It conveyed a hint of coming manhood and responsibilities: it was the voice of the Navy, bending on the leading-strings, heard for the first time.

But on a plane far nearer earth stood the Term Lieutenants, each one the god and hero, the Big Brother of his term. That they, their Boxer or South African medal ribbons, their tattoo-marks, County or International caps, biceps, and all the things that were theirs, were the objects of their respective term's slavish adulation, goes without saying. Bloody encounters between their self-appointed champions over an adverse criticism or doubt cast upon a forgotten word were not unknown. Two entire terms once joined battle and bled each others' noses the length and breadth of the echoing "Skipper's Woods" to clinch some far-flung argument as to the merits of their respective "Loots."

There were but four of them, and they were picked from the wardrooms of the whole Navy. Small wonder some three hun-

dred grubby urchins fresh from school found in them admirable qualities.

Ashore, on the playing-fields, or across the red plough-land at the tails of the beagles, they laboured in close intimate fellowship with the atoms of clay Providence thrust beneath their thumbs. But on board it seemed they faded from ken, being rarely seen save at classes or when in pairs the term percolated through the wardroom for dessert, plastered as to the hair, patent-leather shod, to sip and cough over a glass of ambrosial port at either elbow of their Lieutenant.

Seeing and unseen, knowing their terms as only men who spend their lives among men can know and understand the embryo, they were the guiding invisible wisdom behind the cadet captains, who outwardly ruled the decks.

The cadet captains were chosen from the three senior terms, set apart from their fellows by the fact that they wore "stand-up" collars and a triangular gold badge on the left cuff.

Minor authority in other guises was greeted much the same as it is in all communities of boyhood. The platitudes of notice-boards no fellow with his heart in the right place could be expected to remember over well. The acknowledged sway of instructors and masters was largely a matter of knowing to a nicety how far an adventurous spirit could go (in the realms of science and freehand drawing it was a long way) before the badgered pedagogue turned and bit. Terms paid strict allegiance to their own chief petty officers. But, as has already been shown, this was an affair of the heart and the sentiments. He was theirs, and they were his: thus it had been from the beginning.

There was, however, one voice that rarely repeated an order, one court from which appeal, if possible, was undreamed of—that of the cadet captain. Their rule was without vexatious tyranny, but it was an iron rule. The selection of these cadet captains was done carefully, and mistakes were few. The standard of the whole was no mean one, and for three months the Lieutenant of the First Term had been studying the raw material, working with it, playing with it, talking to it—or rather listening while it talked to him. . . . Thus cadet captains were chosen, and the queer eager loyalty with which the rest paid them allegiance was the first stirring of the quickened Naval Spirit, foreshadowing that strange fellowship to be, brotherhood of discipline and control, of austerity and a half-mocking affectionate tolerance.

To the cadet captains, perhaps, can be attributed the passage, almost untarnished through the years, of the *Britannia* traditions. They were concerned, these youthful Justices of the Peace, with more than the written law. It they enforced right enough, but with a tolerance one might expect of fifteen summers ad-

ministering the foibles and rules of fifty. On the other hand, did a "new" unbutton a single button of his monkey-jacket, a "Three" deign to swing his keys, a "Sixer" to turn up his trousers or tilt his cap on the back of his head (the prerogative of the "Niner" or Fourth Term), and Nemesis descended upon him ere he slept that night. Nemesis, by virtue of its unblemished character, and the favour its triangular badge found in the eyes of the gods, was allowed to turn in half an hour after the remainder. It occupied itself during this time in guzzling cocoa and biscuits smeared with strawberry jam, provided for its delectation by the authorities—though the cost was said to be defrayed by the parents of the common herd relegated to hammocks, and the contemplation of this orgy out of one drowsy though envious eye.

Biscuits finished, Nemesis would draw from his pocket a knotted "togie" of hemp, and having removed traces of jam from his features, proceed to administer summary justice in the gloom where the hammocks swung.

It was, of course, grossly illegal, and stigmatised by the authorities as "a pernicious system of private and unauthorised punishments." But the alternative was open to any who cared to appeal to Cæsar. Appealing to Cæsar meant spending subsequent golden afternoons on the parade-ground, swinging a heavy barbell to the tune of "Sweet Dreamland Faces," blared out on a cornet by a bored bandsman.

So summary justice ruled, and it ruled in this wise:—

"Shove your knuckles outside that blanket—you needn't pretend to be asleep——"

Chorus of snores, deafening in their realism and self-conscious rectitude, from the wrongdoer's neighbours.

"You were slack attending belly-muster[1] for the third time running——"

"I swear——"

"You'd better not. You'll get six more for swearing——"

"Ow!"

"*Don't* make such a rux . . ."

"Ow!"

"If you yell you'll get double."

"Ow!"

"That's for being slack. Now the other hand. . . . That's for 'nerving'" (modernised = swanking) "with your thumbs in your beckets——"

"Ow!"

"*Shut* up! Stick your knuckles out properly."

"I swear I didn't—ow! . . . Good-night."

. . . . . .

Memories, ah, memories! Haphazard, but happy as only the far-off things can seem, half revealed through the mists of years. Grim old cradle of the Eternal Navy, there lies on

[1] "Belly-muster," as its name gracefully implies, was a parade of lightly-clad suspects in procession past the sick-bay while the lynx-eyed surgeon scanned each brisket for traces of incipient chicken-pox rash.

my desk a blotting-pad hewed from your salt timbers; it may be some whimsical ghost strayed out of it to provoke these random recollections. Does it, I wonder, ever unite with other ghosts from chiselled garden-seat or carved candlestick, and there, on the moonlit waters of the Dart, refashion, rib by rib, keel and strake and stempost, a Shadow Ship?

And what of the Longshoremen Billies that plied for hire between the shore and the after-gangway—Johnnie Farr (whom the Good Lawd durstn't love), Hannaford of the wooden leg, and all the rest of that shell-backed fraternity? Gone to the haven of all good ships and sailormen: and only the night wind abroad beneath the stars whispers to the quiet hills the tales of sharks and pirates and the Chiny seas that once were yours and ours.

But what familiar faces throng once more the old decks, and cluster round the empty ports! Is it only to fond memory that you seemed the cheeriest and noblest, or did some beam of the glory to be yours stray out of the Hereafter and paint your boyish faces thus, O best-remembered from those far-off days?

You crowd too quickly now, you whose fair names are legion, so that the splendour of your sacrifices blur and intermingle. The North Sea knows you, and the hidden Belgian mine-fields; the Aurora Borealis was the candle that lit some to bed, and the surf on the beaches of Gallipoli murmurs to others a never-ending lullaby. Ostend and Zeebrugge will not forget you, and the countless tales of your passing shall be the sword-hilt on which our children's children shall cut their teeth.

From out of that Shadow Ship lying at her moorings off the old Mill Creek come the faint echoes of your boyish voices floating out across the placid tide. Could we but listen hard enough, we might catch some message of guidance and encouragement from you who have had your Day:—

"*We are the dead. . . .*

. . . . . .

To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high:
If ye break faith with us who die,
We shall not sleep. . . ."

There shall be no faith broken. God rest you merry, Gentlemen.

AN INVOLUNTARY VISIT:

THREE DAYS WITH THE TURKS IN MESOPOTAMIA.

BY P. C. S. H.

I.

THE Ballast in the back seat was nozzling over the edge of his cockpit. The folds of the rocky country below looked like crumpled brown paper that had been ineffectually smoothed out, very different from the flat blankness of the plain to which he was accustomed, where the trench lines showed up as clear as print on a page, and there was nothing except the river and an occasional canal-cut.

He was interested in trying to spot trenches and sangars in these wrinkles, in watching the stone weirs which combed the looping river at frequent intervals, and in the movements of the small groups running about below. The crackling alongside of him must have been going on for some time before he noticed it. He looked round carefully for the broken stay or loose end which was making the noise. Everything seemed all right. Then he suddenly realised the noise must be the striking of bullets. In this machine he was not sitting as usual so close over the engine that nothing was audible. Here he was well away from the roar. He looked at the back of the Pilot's head. This had no effect. People who use aeroplanes lose their belief in telepathy.

The Pilot was reflecting what a poisonous country it would be for a forced landing, when the movement of the water-gauge caught his eye. It ran rapidly up to the top, boiling. He swung the machine at once, banking sharply round to the left. The pointer of the water-gauge fell back to zero. Empty radiator. Must have been hit. The machine had its nose towards home now, but the question was how long would the engine last. He looked round at the Ballast, still nozzling eagerly, but could not catch his eye. All that fatuous ass seemed to be concerned with was whether to open with the machine-gun on the scattered targets below; he was apparently irritated by the increased volume of fire from the ground, and engrossed with the idea of hitting back.

The engine stopped. Pilot glanced round. Ballast looked up. This time their eyes met. Telepathy was unnecessary. In the sudden silence the air all round seemed to be crackling with musketry. The

machine was sweeping down on to a most uninviting stretch of rocky wrinkles.

The Ballast stood up for a good look over, saw evasion impossible, and landing apparently hopeless. He wondered if it were worth while opening fire. He felt curiously impersonal; merely hoped hard that he wouldn't be only badly smashed up and left alive.

The Pilot was busy with all his faculties. Just in time he saw in the broad *nala* bottom a little smooth stretch at the foot of a cliff, wheeled sharp, and made a perfect landing with the nose of the machine not twenty yards from the rock face.

"Shall I let 'em have it?" shouted Ballast, fingering the gun and eyeing the rocks. "Give me your matches," snapped Pilot. The matches were in an inner pocket, and took some finding. The *nala* was two or three hundred yards wide, and both rocky edges were lined with excited Turks wildly discharging their rifles. Others in extended order were hurrying up the *nala* bunching temptingly.

Bullets were hitting the machine. The cockpit seat splintered suddenly; Ballast yapped out a damn as his leg was grazed; Pilot was busy wrenching at the petrol-pipe, muttering imprecations. In the hearts of both men was blackness unspeakable. The advancing groups were hesitating now, approaching uncertainly, less than a hundred yards away. Not without reason indeed: the fire of their fellows on the banks was heavy, promiscuous, and wild to a degree, coming from all points of the compass. It was hardly worth while walking into that criss-cross barrage. Ballast was standing up with his hand on the machine-gun. He could make certain of a dozen of them anyway. Pilot got the feed-pipe broken at last, and called out, "Right; she's alight." Ballast looked round and held up his hands. Both men began slowly to climb out of their seats. In a few seconds the volume of musketry slackened and died away as the embarrassed figures in the *nala* ran up.

II.

The first officer to arrive seized our hands, and, pump-handling vigorously, burst out with the astounding remark, "Don't be frightened; put yourselves at ease; you are quite safe now." He was followed by a string of other Turks triumphant, all congratulating either themselves on being in command of the particular party that had actually brought down the plane, or congratulating us on being alive. Our state of mind, needless to say, was not exactly congratulatory nor triumphant.

We found we had landed within a quarter of a mile of

the front line, and right in the thick of a battalion reserve. The battalion headquarters were only three or four hundred yards away, and to these we were led—a small square shelter of waterproof sheets. Some handshaking and interrogation followed, whilst half a dozen eager officers of various grades, squatting outside, all joined in exposing the depth of their sympathy and the badness of their French.

It was hot in the little tent, and overcoats became burdensome. Their removal caused considerable excitement, as the Pilot's exalted rank was thereby made evident; whilst the Ballast had the misfortune to carry on his lapels the most unpopular blazon in the British Army. Coffee was produced, and excellent coffee it was; the Battalion Commander dashed constantly from telephone to table, where, with the assistance of the Battalion Doctor's knowledge of French, he was writing an elaborate report of the capture; every one chattered and laughed; the sun shone; and Pilot and Ballast sat opposite one another and glowered gloomily at the ground.

Soon a party arrived with all the movable gear from the aeroplane, which was spread out for inspection. Fortunately neither of us had any maps or papers of importance. The Turks, both at this time and subsequently, were most scrupulous about all one's private effects except arms and papers. One was permitted to keep all other personal property — including even the emergency ration-bag, which contained a tin of bully and two biscuits. All money was returned at once. A search party was even sent to look for one of Ballast's gloves which he had dropped. Report-writing and exultation was resumed. The part we took in the conversation was not very active; we were hardly in the mood for it. And on their part, such of it as was addressed to us in French consisted mostly of clumsy attempts to elicit information, or else of still more clumsy attempts at consolation. The main refrain of this was: "Well, anyway, the war is over for you; and you will be alive at the end!"

More coffee was produced at intervals, until at length a clatter in the *nala* outside heralded the arrival of a Divisional Staff Officer — a stately young man who could speak no French.

Riding-ponies with Arab saddles were awaiting us, surrounded by an escort of flattering magnitude.

We travelled about forty minutes in this way, passing a good many parties of men resting in caves or in little shelters of stones. All were well turned-out in German infantry kit, complete down to the crowned buttons and the red piping. The only article of Turkish kit that was in evidence was the Enveri topi. The Division seemed well provided with travelling kitchens, where soup

was being made as we passed. But we found later that rations were very short. Men were issued with one loaf of black bread every two days, soup once daily, and sometimes fish or dates or a little meat. It was astonishing how fit they seemed to be, and how cheerful. The officers had ample coffee and a certain amount of sugar and tea; but even they were not nearly so well off either in quality or quantity as a man on our own full-scale standard ration.

As far as equipment went, they were better provided than any Turkish troops previously encountered by us in Mesopotamia.

As we went along, Turkish officers were constantly coming to converse with our escort and shake hands with us. One of these, a dapper little man in a great state of excitement, danced up all aglow, and wrung us repeatedly by the hand as he cried in French: "I brought you down! I brought you down! It was me. I am the machine-gun officer. See that hill? On that alone I have eighteen mitrailleuses; all were directed on you — all. I arranged the barrage. I brought you down. Tell me where my guns hit you. You are not wounded? No — good! The radiator—ah, perfectly! But nowhere else? You do not know! Doubtless your machine was hit many times. It must be riddled without doubt. You are very lucky to have escaped unhurt. It was a very good barrage. I arranged it. You had no chance — no chance at all. But you are yourselves unhurt. I am very glad of that. No, I am a Turk. Yes, there is a German, but he is only a corporal. We do not require German assistance. No! I arrange it all myself,— I arrange everything!" When he had got over his exultation a little he proved interesting enough. The Division had lately come from Europe, was well found, and had a much bigger proportion of machine-guns than we had been accustomed to expect. Rations scanty, but ammunition plentiful.

We knew of a recent change in command of this Division, and ascertained that the late Divisional Commander had left about ten days previously. "Recalled for another appointment," as our polite little informant put it; actually, as we happened to know, Stellenbosched for a withdrawal.

All this time we were moving through rocky hills and along stony *nalas* till, rounding a shoulder, we found another assemblage gathering in groups in the proximity of a very English-looking bell-tent.

At the door of the bell-tent we were received by a charming spare old gentleman with the most expansive smile imaginable. Every tooth appeared to be gold crowned. In excellent French, and in the suavest manner, he poured forth his sympathy and his philosophic condolence. "Gentlemen, you are sad. There is

no reason. You have battled gallantly. You have done your duty; more than duty. It is the chance of war. Why this sadness, then? You will now remain in safety and some degree of comfort till the end of the war. That end cannot now be far off. Why be sad? In a little time the war will be over and you will be restored safely to your families, in full knowledge that you have done all that was possible."

Coffee was produced. The golden-mouthed Brigadier continued his philosophy on the theme of captivity. He descanted at large on the attitude of mind of British officer prisoners in a way that indicated infinite experience. We happened to know, however, that he could not by any possibility have met more than four at most. He discussed the use and abuse of aeroplanes, and was very explicit in his dislike of our bombing and machine-gunning enterprises.

He found the situation in Europe interesting. The Germans were advancing. They were already bombarding Paris. Very soon the war would be over. And then — then we should meet again happily in Paris? or London? yes.

We exchanged addresses, drank more coffee, and proceeded on our journey. The path now descended from the bare broken country into the narrow strip of grassy plain which borders the river. This prevented us seeing the surrounding country at all. The utmost one could do was to mark the shapes of hills, the mouths of particularly big *nalas*, and the positions of any landmarks that were passed.

We were able to talk together, and agreed that we must play for delay in every way possible. We both had a general idea of the intentions of the British force, and knew that the nearer we could keep to the front, the more our movement back could be postponed, the better.

After about five miles going, we turned off from the river, and soon afterwards saw a group of tents in a *nala*. This proved to be the camp of the Divisional Commander, a tall thin man of forty-five, with an intelligent face and thick gold-rimmed glasses. He received us politely outside his bell-tent, and ushered us in. We sat down, and coffee was produced at once. The Divisional Commander did not feel much at home in French, and told us that he would summon one of his men who could speak English excellently. A good-looking boy of eighteen appeared shortly after at the tent door, saluted smartly, and opened on us in faultless American. Most of the conversation after this was carried on through his interpretation; though occasionally the General, when very interested, would burst into execrable French, search wildly for the required word, stammer unintelligibly, come to a halt, and then have recourse to the interpreter once more.

After a polite expression of

satisfaction that we had not been wounded, he told us that we must make ourselves at home. To facilitate which process he informed us that the tent and all its furniture were English. They had come from Gallipoli, spoils of war. He was very certain that we should not be prisoners long. The war was in its last stage: Paris bombarded, and the Germans advancing at the rate of five kilometres a day. His news seemed accurate as far as we knew the situation, and to be rather later than anything we had heard. He read out to us a wireless message just received, announcing a further German advance, and claiming the capture of a number of villages. From what we saw all along their wireless appeared to be very good, and the arrangements for the dissemination of news prompt and efficient. Bulletins were received throughout the day. They may have been due to the fact that at the time the news was favourable, the German advance in France being then in full swing. In any case, the best use was made of it; the troops were informed promptly, and confidence in the final victory of the Germans was most noticeable in all ranks.

We had a long conversation with the Divisional Commander on the subject. He was astonished at our inability to grasp the inevitableness of the German victory. After a long period of eloquence which made no impression, he asked us in desperation, "Well, when do *you* think the war will be over?" Ballast answered impassively, "When we have won." This reduced the General to dumbfoundered silence. But he returned repeatedly to the point during the next hour, incredulous that any one could be so blockheaded. On one of these occasions the Pilot in his suavest manner put in, "It is difficult for you to realise, General, that we—the English-speaking portion of the Allies, I mean—have hardly begun to fight yet. We weren't military nations, you see, and up till now we've really only been making our armies: just training them, you know. Next year, however, we hope to be able really to start ahead." This nearly finished off our host.

Conversation turned on to our own campaign. Old battles were discussed, and the deplorable prospect of the summer of inaction was touched upon; especially the extreme discomfort of the present position on this front, and the appalling heat that was to be anticipated in these rocky trenches. It would be a very boring business for both sides sitting opposite one another in these trenches all through the hot weather.

Relations being established now on a cordial basis, Pilot asked whether a message could be sent across to the British, so that our relatives could be informed that we were uninjured; and that our kit might be dropped over. The General assured us that this would be done: that he had already

wired to his Army Headquarters for instructions, but hoped that we should be staying with him for a few days, as officer prisoners had done previously, until the arrival of our kit. (We ascertained later, however, that the only information the British H.Q. received on the subject from the Turks officially, was the Constantinople Wireless Press of the next day which mentioned our capture.) We touched tentatively on the subject of Germans, and met with very little enthusiasm. The General evidently disliked the subject. He stated briefly that he had a number attached to his Command in various technical and advisory capacities, but that none of them were in a position of any executive authority.

It was very noticeable that there was no love lost between the Germans and the Turks or the Arabs, or any others that we met. They were heartily disliked everywhere.

Before we took our leave the General remonstrated in a very decided manner on the abuse of aeroplane superiority. He had none now at his direct disposal, whilst we had plenty; and not only indulged in frequent bombing raids and reconnaissances (which he regarded as mere waste of petrol on our part: surely one flight a day would be ample), but had taken to the reprehensible habit of sweeping down low, and machine-gunning roads and paths in his rear, thus rendering still more acute his already troublesome transport difficulties.

Pilot of course pointed out in the blandest manner that in this terrain observation was very difficult, and preparations for concentration for offensive action might easily be missed unless constantly watched; moreover we had known of his arrival, and it was necessary for us to watch very carefully a man of his reputation. However, the General was not to be diverted from his reproaches anent our unsportsmanlike habit of machine-gunning harmless ration-parties well away from his anti-aircraft defences.

Before we took our leave we asked for a meal, which was promised; and for the return of such private correspondence as had been in our pockets, which was refused.

It was nearly sunset when we were dismissed. Ali, the young interpreter, was sent along with us to see that our needs were attended to. We passed *en route* a big green double fly-tent in which three German officers were sitting, and a little farther on came to a bell-tent from which bedding was being removed. Tentage being very short, Turkish officers were clearing out to make room for us.

Throughout our sojourn in their hands we invariably met with the greatest courtesy and consideration from all Turkish officers. The hunger and cold we experienced were due to force of circumstances or actual lack of supplies, not to any ill-will on their part; and

the fact that the lot of a wounded prisoner of war would be extremely unenviable, is not due to any deliberate brutality or frightfulness, but to the total absence of any adequate medical material, or personnel, or arrangements.

Ali showed himself most friendly. He was a man of good family, had been educated at an American college at Constantinople, and knew many of the English Colony there before the War. He related to us various stories about General Townshend, whom he had seen, and for whom the Turks appear to have a great respect and affection. He also gave us good accounts of four R.F.C. officers who had previously been brought down on this front. All had been kept at Divisional Headquarters for several days. One pair of these, a Pilot and Observer, one of them a particularly hefty Colonial, appeared to have had heart-breaking luck. They were forced down a long way behind the Turkish front, made a landing in the desert, burnt their machine all right, and got away. They struggled gallantly on for forty-eight hours, and had got so near home before they were caught by Turkish cavalry, that they were actually in sight of our Lamb cars, who unfortunately did not notice them.

Ali's dislike of the Germans was extremely emphatic. Later on, when one of these gentlemen was coming to interrogate us, Ali bounced into the tent with the warning, "Here comes the sausage, but don't you take any notice of him: he can't touch you." At the time we were somewhat bewildered by this announcement, as, not having had anything since an early breakfast, we were rather expecting something to eat.

We got permission to walk up and down outside the tent under a guard of four sentries, and on one pretext or another managed to get a fair idea of our immediate surroundings by nightfall, when we were confined to our tent, and Ali went off to get us a meal. This gave us an opportunity of discussing ways and means. It was a most unfortunate thing for us that the moon was almost full: a full moon in Mesopotamia is to the English moon as an arc-lamp to a glow-worm. Moreover, at dusk the wind drops entirely, and the night is so still that the slightest noise is audible.

Our tent was pitched on a ledge in a small *nala*. The guard lived five yards farther up the *nala*, with one sentry at our door, and another on the hillside above the tent.

The hillside was covered with loose stones. The only possible way of leaving the tent would be by the back, where the earth was cut away to fit it. One would have to go without boots, and even then there was little chance of avoiding making a noise on the stones. The full moon was bright as day on the lemon-coloured rock.

There were three dogs about, apparently belonging to the

guard, jolly beasts of an Arab sheep-dog strain. We spent half an hour playing with them and making friends, hoping to avoid their suspicions later on.

We thought that if we could only avoid the sentries and get a clear hour's start, we would have a fair chance. Without this start, any attempt at escape would be hopeless.

It seemed advisable to refuse beds and to sleep on the ground, both for warmth and also to be more inconspicuous, and ready to take advantage of any possible clouding over of the moon, storm, or other accidental occurrence.

We both had a fairly shrewd suspicion as to what the British force was contemplating, and a very hearty confidence in the two Generals concerned. We knew that if any one could bring the coup off, it would be the leader of the Dolphins. But we did not know for what date the stroke was planned, nor any details, of course. However, we were much relieved by the evident intention of the Turkish Divisional Commander to keep us where we were for a day or two.

About seven o'clock they brought us a meal of black bread, thick soup, and a fowl. Fully occupied, we were surprised by a "Good evening, gentlemen, don't let me interrupt you," in perfect English. This was the German Intelligence Officer. After a short preliminary spar over our refusal to give anything but name and rank, he gave in with good enough grace, and entertained us for an hour or more with his reminiscences of Calcutta, where he had been living for sixteen years before the War, engaged in the rice trade. As his absence in the East had prevented him from putting in the necessary training during this period, he lost his rank of Reserve Officer, and had to go in as a Private when the raising of the age-limit in Germany caught him in the second year of the War. He had risen to "Under Officer" quickly enough, and had volunteered for Asia, thinking his experience would help him. The Senior Intelligence Officer with the Force having lately gone sick, he had been appointed to his job, and was expecting his commission to arrive very shortly. It was already on its way from Berlin. He was being well paid, especially as all Germans on this front were paid in gold, which they promptly exchanged for Turkish notes at a fraction of the latter's face value. These notes they remitted to Europe, where State bonds could be bought and paid for with the notes at their full face value.

Asked what had happened to his property in Calcutta, he laughed cheerfully. "Oh, I am out of that all right. I sold up everything in June 1914, including my house, and got my family and all away. Some of my stuff was on the last two boats which arrived at Hamburg." No comment seemed necessary.

He said that the higher authorities were anxious to get us to Aleppo as soon as possible, and that we would

start as soon as a conveyance could be arranged. This most unwelcome news made us both long heartily for a heavy storm that night: a murrain on all Turk transport: or a plague of profound slumber on all our guards.

Broussa was likely to be our eventual destination: a delightful climate, excellent water-supply, high above the Sea of Marmora, charming views, only four hours' run from Stamboul—all the comforts of a first-class penitentiary in fact.

We were pretty sleepy, but we hadn't been rolled in our greatcoats on the floor of the tent for more than an hour when we were waked by a curt summons to get up and be going. In vain we opposed this: cajoled, delayed, even insisted on an A.D.C. going back to the General with a request that as we were very tired we might be permitted a night's rest. The answer came that the order was inexorable, had come from higher authority, and must be obeyed.

A small springless waggon, closed in all round with canvas flaps, awaited us in the bright moonlight, surrounded by about a dozen mounted men. We found next morning that these were Tartars. They were looked upon by the Turkish authorities as very trustworthy and quite unbribable, probably quite correctly—in any case, they couldn't understand our best-intentioned attempts at bribing in any known language. Strong, cheery, hearty fellows, but absolute barbarians. Two sat on the box of the waggon and appeared to use the whip unceasingly. Through the chinks of the canvas we could see a man riding at each wheel, whilst three or four more spurred their steeds along so close behind that whenever the vehicle checked, the horses ran their noses into the backboard. The remainder of the escort kept ten or twelve lengths in rear. It was a most uncomfortable night: cold, and the road very rough. The cart had constantly to be helped over bad bits by one or two of the guard, and sometimes we had all to get out whilst the empty waggon was dragged over some obstacle. Towards morning we halted half an hour for water.

Soon after dawn the miserable pair of ponies gave out altogether. We were not sorry to get down and walk to get some warmth into our legs. Four of the guard accompanied us, the remainder staying with the waggon. The whip had no effect on the exhausted animals harnessed to the vehicle. With the indifference born of habit, three or four of the guard would proceed to dismount and belabour them savagely with their rifles till they staggered on once more. As the sun rose we came to strips of cultivation and scattered palm-trees, and saw for the first time the famous water-wheels by which all the irrigation of the upper reaches of the river is done.

An arched aqueduct of grey stone runs out into the water and carries at its far end one or more Heath-Robinson-

looking wheels, eighteen to twenty-four feet in diameter, made of branches and logs all in the rough. Along the circumference of this is bound a series of earthen pots, and on the spokes are fastened paddles. Against these the force of the current is directed by stone weirs, which slope diagonally out into the stream. As the wheel turns slowly, groaning and travailing, the pots dip under the water at the bottom of the circle, fill, and travel on up till, at the top, they empty their burden with a pleasant splashing into the stone runnel. Why the whole contraption doesn't fall to bits forthwith is one of those mysteries of Oriental mechanism, like the Ekka and the Dhobi's donkey, to which sojourn in the East gradually hardens one.

The water-wheels became more frequent; the palms thickened to a grove; houses began to occur at intervals. We passed a couple of big caves, wherein ammunition-boxes were dimly visible, guarded by sprawling Tartars, and crossed a field to the village on the river's edge.

At the entrance to the *khan* —a closed square of sheds with a two-storied building at each end—we were received by the Commandant, and conducted to his office above the gateway. Here coffee was provided, and the nobility and gentry of the neighbourhood quickly gathered to meet us. All the officers were lieutenants. There was he Commandant himself, a weak-looking, middle-aged Arab, who perhaps shaved every Wednesday: Tuesday, to-day. The Post-Commandant, a meagre, saturnine sort of youth, buttoned up to the chin in a magnificent grey German officer's overcoat reaching to his ankles, which made him look more than ever like a Jesuit in a cassock. The Supply Officer—round and comfortable, as was befitting. And the Mayor—in dress and appearance a seedy north-country farmer. None knew English or more than a few words of French, and as we had taken up a firm position on the only bench, happily they melted away before long. This gave us a chance of examining our quarters. Ballast very soon found in an old box full of papers an excellent German map, and got busy measuring scales and bearings which might be useful to us.

Accompanied by the sentry normally stationed at the door of our room, we were permitted to take exercise up and down on the flat roof of the single-storied shed which ran round three sides of the courtyard. We thus obtained a fair idea of the lie of the land and the dispositions of the enemy. The office had two small unglazed windows looking across thirty yards of foreshore to the river. Pulled up on the foreshore for several hundred yards were rows and rows of those heavy square-ended, flat-bottomed boats which the Turks build higher up and send down river loaded with stores. Opposite us, across a couple of hundred yards of the clean, swiftly-running river, was a palm-

covered island, on which the main village seemed to be built. One of the big boats was being used regularly as a ferry to the island, worked with difficulty by four men. The drop from the office windows to the ground was about 12 feet, but the room was thoughtlessly situated directly over the main entrance arch, where a sentry was posted. By manipulating the table and bench, it might be possible, though not easy, to get out of the window and up on to the roof. This roof was the highest part of the whole building, and extended over the five rooms which formed the upper storey of the *khan* along its front face. There was also an upper storey, where the garrison lived, along its rear face. One long side of the courtyard was formed by a wall 12 feet high; the other side by the line of flat-roofed sheds, on which we were permitted to take exercise. The drop from this roof to the lane alongside was only about 12 feet, and the lane was only 50 yards long, but there was a sentry stationed at the end where it gave on to the fields. Beyond him, a couple of hundred yards across the open, and one would be at the foot of the hill, rather uncomfortably close to the sentry at the ammunition cave, but with only three or four hundred yards' climb up the open slope to the crest. Not till one was over the crest would one be out of sight of the village in this time of full moon.

When we returned from our promenade, we found ourselves transferred from the office to the room next door. The windows of this were somewhat less practicable; on the other hand, it was four yards farther from the sentry in the archway. We were just off to sleep when we received a visit from the local medical officer, an Armenian, who spoke fairly good English, learned in the Medical College at Beirut. He seemed to think we should stay where we were for a couple of days whilst a better conveyance was being provided. He offered to send us up some bedding pending the arrival of our own kit, and interested himself in arranging for the provision of an evening meal for us.

He invited us to visit his hospital on the island in the afternoon, saying he would make the necessary arrangements with the Commandant. Accordingly about 2.30 P.M. we were ferried across with one officer and four Tartars as escort. The current was swift, and it was only after much invocation of Allah that the rough clumsy boat just managed to make the landing without being swept downstream. We were met on the bank by the doctor and the pharmacist, another Armenian, and shown with great pride over the hospital. This consisted of four or five miserable Arab houses, with tiny rooms and mud walls, stuffy, fly-blown, and hot. The patients lay crowded on the floors of the rooms,—at times, it was said, to the number of a hundred or even more. It was a most depressing sight, yet we

were assured it was by far the best hospital within a hundred miles of the firing line; and until the present doctor's arrival, three months' previously, there had been nothing at all. Indeed it was only within the last few weeks, by dint of repeated applications, that he had been able to get any drugs or dressings. He was immensely proud of his pharmacy, though to us it seemed a very poor affair: three small shelves of drugs and a box of dressings. This was the only Clearing Hospital for a whole Infantry Division, and the next nearest hospital was a hundred miles back from the front, over a very rough road, with practically no means of conveyance available for a serious case.

Tea, with sugar—both rather precious commodities — was served to us, our escort, and various other personages who had drifted into the doctor's bedroom. Here he showed us his photographs and certificates, his few books—he had an English 'Materia Medica' amongst his most treasured possessions — and his water-colour sketches. Yes, he was an artist. But appreciation of Armenian art is evidently not acquired spontaneously by Europeans. Our Turkish confrères became gradually so bored by the English conversation that they eventually left us alone, with only the four Tartars to guard us. The island was a very pretty little place, a happy combination of clear green water, grey rock, mud walls, and palm-trees. There seemed to be a great many remains of ancient stone buildings. The island lies about mid-stream, 250 yards from the right bank, whence we had come, and rather farther from the left.

One incident in our wanderings round the island gave us some momentary anxiety. We were passing under a two-storied house, Pilot with the doctor somewhat ahead, deep in conversation, when Ballast, who was behind, looked up and saw three or four Germans in an upper window. Pilot's conversation could not be stopped quite at once, and if any of the Huns happened to understand English we were afraid we might get into trouble.

Before we left the island we had an opportunity of seeing the village carpenter at work on the construction of a new water-wheel, and the miracle of its holding together at all became more wonderful than ever. Eventually about four o'clock we returned to the right bank, the richer for a good deal of useful information, and a very precious glass bottle of one imperial quart capacity.

During the day the Pilot had once or twice heard what he thought was the sound of guns to the south-east, and after consultation we decided that if the moon should be hidden at all, or if any chance should occur of evading or downing the sentry stationed under our window, we would make a dash for the desert that night. The river was beyond our powers of swim-

ming without assistance, and would mean leaving our boots, thus rendering us practically immobile if we did reach the far bank. We had a quart of water, and in the emergency bag we had brought from the aeroplane enough rations for forty-eight hours at a pinch. We had been promised a meal that evening, and were beginning indeed to feel that we needed it. We knew the directions and distances approximately from the German map, and we felt confident that once given a fair start, in that limestone wilderness full of holes and caverns, we had a very good chance of avoiding our pursuers. The whole difficulty lay in getting the fair start, and the most insuperable part of this, under the existing conditions of full moon and great quiet, was the evasion of the sentries in the first few hundred yards. For this we must depend on opportunity.

So much settled, Pilot promptly fell asleep. Ballast went out to stalk up and down the roof, and that is how he happened to witness the arrival of the messenger. The sun was within half an hour of setting when there was a clatter of hoofs on the road, and an Arab came galloping, loose rein, down the lane. The pale ascetic, always buttoned to chin in his strait overcoat, happened to be slowly pacing the foreshore. The Arab threw himself off his mount, dashed up to the officer and commenced an excited harangue. At once the whole demeanour of the latter changed. A few more words and both were running towards the *khan*, jabbering hard. Ballast turned on his heel, entered the room, shook the Pilot, and said: "Wake up, old bird, things have started happening; Bob the Thruster is getting a move on." The *khan* was already resounding with shouting, running, and bustle. Very soon the wild-eyed Commandant burst into the room with peremptory orders that the prisoners were to start off at once. The greatest astonishment was feigned: every form of pretext to delay matters was tried. We were both bundled out unceremoniously into the same old vehicle as before. Whack! whack! went the whip, and off we started at full gallop, with our mounted escort tearing along behind. A regular *sauve qui peut* from the village was in progress. As far as could be seen westwards the whole strip of the plain between the hills and the river was dotted with flying figures. Men on ponies, men on donkeys, men running—all with faces towards the sunset, and apprehensive glances over their shoulders. No one seemed to have waited to collect any kit. Perhaps they had none. Anyway, they were rushing along with nothing but rifles and bandoliers, a hunk of bread and a water-bottle, with perhaps a hastily snatched up coat or blanket.

The waggon jumped and bounded, the drivers lashed the horses, the Tartars beat

their mounts, throwing jerky broken sentences at one another. This frenzied compliment to the British Army continued till dusk, when the pace moderated and eventually slowed down to a walk, all that the poor tired-out beasts were capable of. We were exultant. It is pleasant to see a horse you've backed win. Far pleasanter when it's a man; and in this case we both had known and had steadily backed the winner for a long time.

Our joy, however, was somewhat tempered by personal considerations. We could not help wishing he had put it off for one night! Every yard back we went was making our escape more difficult. Various possibilities were discussed, the probabilities of what had been happening were conjectured, and a line of action for the morrow decided on. Eventually we composed ourselves to the effort of dosing between the jolts of the very long and chilly night's journey; to obtain any rest in that vehicle was a matter of considerable and continuous effort.

Dawn found the ponies dead-beat. No brutality on the part of the Tartars could rouse them. Ourselves, we were glad enough to walk again. The road had been considerably improved by the Turks or Germans; it had been well graded and was now fit for motor transport, except for one big *nala*, the bridge over which was incomplete.

It was a jolly morning, full of larks and breeze and sunshine. In the distance were the palm-groves of our destination, the highest point up the river that the palm flourishes. All the country we passed through was deserted and barren, but the whole river-plain bore traces of former continous cultivation. Everywhere ruined aqueducts, wheel-pillars, and weirs, and the enduring traces of ancient ploughs. Desolation, the trail of the Turk.

About 9 o'clock, as we neared the outskirts of the town, four of our planes came over quite low. The Tartars were greatly perturbed. "Tyara, Tyara," they babbled, snatched off our hats and hustled us hither and thither in search of a place of concealment, the remainder scurrying behind the nearest rocks and walls and opening fire. By this time every rifle in the town appeared to be engaged, frantically yapping. We were wishing the planes would go on, nervous lest a lucky shot might bring down one of them. But with their customary magnificent indifference the planes took no notice; they circled slowly round over the town, emptied a few Lewis gun magazines, one of them in our direction, and then buzzed carelessly off. It wasn't a very easy incident for the Pilot.

At 9.30 A.M. we reached the Military Headquarters on the river bank in the middle of the town. We were received by a number of junior officers, and on inquiring for the Commandant, were told he was unfortunately away on duty. Of the nature of this duty we had a shrewd suspicion. But the fact was

disappointing, as we particularly wished to see the man for various reasons, one of which was to protest against having no officer to mitigate our Tartar escort. However, warned by previous experience, we were determined to waste no opportunity this time. At once we demanded to see the Doctor, saying we were ill, much too ill to travel any farther. We were assured that we should spend at least two days here, whilst suitable conveyance was being arranged. We then demanded food, of which we really were in need; as, with the exception of the meal on the first night, we had practically eaten nothing for over forty-eight hours. It is a curious fact that neither of us had felt hunger. Possibly the figurative phrase "Fed up" has an actual physical significance.

As usual, every one seemed most anxious to tell us the news from France and the further progress made by the Germans. We asked them what news there was of British progress in Mesopotamia, but the matter appeared to lack interest for them.

The language difficulty was somewhat acute here. No one could talk English, and only two of them knew a little French. The Pilot had a smattering of Arabic, so the negotiations were left to him. His procedure was simple in the extreme: he tried each officer in French or Arabic straightway with "Are you a Turk?" The sheep were thus divided from the goats at one sweep. Remained to seize an opportunity with each non-Turk separately. "Are you an Arab?" "Where do you come from?" The fold was eventually narrowed down to two: a plump, timorous little denizen of Basra and a grave grey-whiskered mariner from Baghdad. Followed from us much praise of these two picturesque habitats of base-barnacles. Eventually as either was isolated, he was asked whether he did not want to see his home again. Hot upon his heartfelt admission came the demand, how much hard gold he wanted to enable him to get home, taking us along with him. By this delightfully direct method we had within an hour of our arrival two active sympathisers cudgelling their brains on our behalf.

Meanwhile, Ballast had been making a personal reconnaissance of the precincts, and came back full of information. There appeared to be only two Tartar sentries. From the latrine on the roof it was an easy drop into a shadowy palm-grove; and, less than a hundred yards across this, the hills rose steeply at once. It would be a long trek back, as a big detour would be necessary—sixty miles probably. But the German map had marked a big *nala* running up into the interior, and at the point where we had crossed that this morning there had been water in it. With any luck we might hope to find water farther up also.

An excellent breakfast was produced: boiled eggs—Ballast in his hurry found out too late they were not hard-boiled—

two black loaves, dollops of sour curds and date-treacle. One black loaf made its way into our emergency bag. Soon afterwards the Doctor arrived. To our disappointment he turned out to be a Turk, not an Armenian. He seemed very little impressed by the sickliness of our appearance, but we explained at length that it was rest and sleep that we really wanted. We also made request for something to clean our teeth with. Most men will agree that though being unshaven is beastly enough, being unable to wash one's teeth is worse. Instead, however, of the mouth-wash we hoped for, a packet of tooth powder was produced. However, one's forefinger is a less inefficient toothbrush than might be imagined.

Much refreshed, we were composing ourselves gratefully to sleep at last on the benches under the Turkish standard which covered the ceiling of the Commandant's office, when a strange officer entered brusquely and announced that he was desolated, but that orders had come for our departure onwards at once. He much regretted that camels were the only means of conveyance available for the next three stages, as all carts had had to be sent off for those wounded in a small skirmish that had occurred with the British yesterday. We asked the reason for all this hurry if the British—as they stoutly maintained—had made no advance. We temporised and entreated. We even appealed to the doctor again, which certainly gained about half an hour, but had no lasting effect. Meanwhile there were signs of considerable bustle in the building, and the crowd of Arabs on the river front before our windows had grown in numbers and interest. Several Germans were moving about, but we saw no officers.

After registering every protest we could devise, we were no longer able to avoid being conducted out to the main road, where we were presented with a fresh escort of twelve Tartars on foot and a Turkish officer on a diminutive pony. To start with, the Tartars were turned out in full marching order, carrying knapsacks, blankets, &c.; but before we had gone four miles everything except rifles and bandoliers was slung on to our camels. The clothing of the men consisted mainly of ragged oddments of European mufti, and the equipment of no two was alike. Most of it seemed to be home-made. Amongst this dozen of our escort we noticed four different patterns of rifle of as many different calibres. Every man carried some two hundred rounds for his own particular pattern. Possibly this was the reason they took every opportunity of discharging their pieces: at a bird, into the river, or apparently just from sheer light-heartedness. After all, every shot lessened their loads. We soon found that as usual the Tartars could speak no language but their own outlandish tongue, of which the Turkish officer was wholly ignorant. Indeed,

he was acquainted with nothing but Turkish, of which neither of us knew one single word. Communication between the component parts of the menagerie was therefore neither rapid nor accurate. For our comfort and delectation two camels with pack-saddles had been provided. One was white and one was brown, and they were the most contrary pair of animals possible. Moreover, these camels have no nose-cords, and are accustomed to be driven in droves, not led. They objected loudly and viciously to being made to sit down, and the moment their heads were released would jump up violently and promptly clear their immediate vicinity. All of which facts proved ultimately very fortunate for us.

The Aleppo road runs straitly at the very foot of the low cliffs which here form the edge of the plateau. The river plain is narrow, and for five miles it is filled from water's edge to cliff wall with date and fruit gardens. Walls and houses, well separated and mostly set along the river's brim, break up the greenery pleasantly. There are islands in the river, and the water is green and clear and rapid. The result is the most picturesque town in Mesopotamia. Bright yellow cliffs, grass crowned; palm plumes and sunshine; almond blossom, and the river racing broad under the sun.

At one point on the edge of the road, in the cliff face, were several caves, the biggest of which was crammed with ammunition.

We had been warned that there were three barren marches ahead, with no villages or cultivation. The last palm-trees stop at the bend above the town, where a big fort on the bluff opposite commands both reaches of the river, up and down. The road does not follow the river, but climbs on to the plateau and cuts ten or twelve miles across a big bend.

Talking it over, we agreed that the British victory must have been pretty complete to have put the wind up to the extent that was evident. It seemed probable that the cavalry had rounded up the whole bunch and then gone on to clear the village where we spent the day yesterday, in which case the armoured cars might possibly be sent on as far as the town we had just left. That was about all they could be expected to manage. It was a vexatious reflection. The pilot was confident, however, that his planes would make great efforts to find out where we were, and possibly even to rescue us. A few days previously one of our two-seaters had been brought down in the desert. A single-seater, seeing the situation, had swooped down, made a landing alongside, picked up both occupants, and got away home all right. But there had been no enemy close by.

In our case matters were more difficult. Even if we were recognised, our escort stuck so close to us always,

that Lewis gun fire would be impracticable; whilst it was very evident from what we had seen, that if any attempt were made to bounce them, they would unhesitatingly lay us out first, whatever they decided to do afterwards. However, an even chance was more than we expected to get; and the R.F.C. would probably devise some wily stratagem, if only they could first ascertain our whereabouts.

Conversation was difficult, as the two camels liked to go different paces, and whenever they saw the least chance would wander off the road to graze, till driven back with blows and imprecations by the escort or the Buddu driver—a decent fellow, named Muhammad, who kept himself austerely aloof from the Tartars. Sitting on the pack-saddles, we had no control whatever over the animals, as there was no nose-string, and our guard refused to allow us even a twig in our hands to direct the beasts.

We had been going about four hours when there was a sudden commotion and shouts of "Tyara"; and, sure enough, there were two of our planes coming along. Much running hither and thither ensued. The Pilot was pulled off his camel and hurried away from the path; his topi was torn off; every one gave orders—except the Turkish officer, who seemed to be the only one that obeyed them. Men dashed about in all directions, quite uselessly, as there was no cover worth mentioning anywhere on that part of the plateau. Ballast's camel was a little distance off the path at the time, with only two Tartars near. He had his feet well tucked up out of reach, unconcerned by the excitement of the Tartars. However, he took off his hat to temporise with them. He was determined to stay on the camel if possible, so as to be more conspicuous for the observers. Overhead came the planes; and then they began circling down over our groups. The Tartars themselves were in two minds what to do. Lower and lower came the planes. Surely they must see us now. Surely! Ballast put up his topi at arm's length and waved it vigorously. The enraged Tartar standing below threw up his rifle—the muzzle within a foot of Ballast's back—and pulled the trigger. The cartridge missed fire.

Ballast, so engrossed in looking up and waving to the plane that he was unconscious of this outrage, treated it accordingly with the courage and indifference that comes of ignorance, and continued his signalling. The infuriated Tartar, impatient of the unreliability of modern inventions, reverted to the methods of his fathers, clubbed his rifle and caught him a swinge across the buttocks that brought him off the camel on to the ground. Both Ballast and the Tartar were now frenzied, and anything might have happened, had not the plane at that moment—crowning irony—opened an extremely accurate and well-directed burst of fire on the pair of them, knocking up the dust all round. By some fluke

neither was hit, but it was rather like a snipe getting through the pattern of No. 5's.

Considerable recrimination in three languages ensued. Everybody was on the run, and we were roughly hustled away on foot from the vicinity of the road. The planes had climbed again and were clearing off. Ballast passionately harangued the Turkish officer on one side, whilst a mob of Tartars assailed him on the other. He understood neither, of course, but hurried along thoroughly frightened of both parties. Excitement gradually subsided. The Pilot, who naturally felt more acutely both the disappointment and the difficulties about the airmen, soothed down the wrothful Ballast. He was confident that the Flying Corps would not give up yet; they would certainly make at least one more attempt. The recognition of the party; the finding of a suitable landing-place in this difficult country; the timing of the exploit; and, most of all, the circumventing of the escort, made the odds against success enormous. It was agreed, however, that in any case, whether an attempt at rescue or at escape, the most important thing for us, and the most difficult, was to get away from the guard: any opportunity for doing this must be carefully watched for and taken advantage of at once. One's thoughts and conversation ran almost exclusively on escape. That one idea is an obsession with a prisoner. Every possibility was canvassed: the procedure most advisable at the first place where we should be allowed to stop for more than a few hours; such scanty information as we had of the Bedouin tribes to southward; the accessibility of the Turkish officials, and the most convincing way of persuading them that money promised would be paid "on delivery of goods"; the best method of surprising and "doing in" silently the armed guard; even the time that would be required to learn Turkish or Arabic sufficient to give one a reasonable chance, should we eventually be incarcerated at Broussa or elsewhere without having had a single previous opportunity of escaping.

Only once did we cease from these fantasies,—and that was at dusk, when we came down off the plateau on to the river-plain, where it was thick with flowers and the smell rose up and caught us by the throat. It was England in one rush: all one's memory of May month in England. And we—out of it: able-bodied but helpless and useless, whilst the War was being fought to a finish. That was the blackest moment of all.

Soon afterwards the Pilot glanced over his shoulder and said, "Look at that." Standing upon the horizon was a single blazing pillar of silver fire—a thing unique—so that for a moment we had no thought of moonrises. Extraordinarily impressive and most wonderfully beautiful. In the whole sky there was no other cloud. After that there was

silence, but the Pilot's confidence never failed him again.

Night fell, and it grew cold on the camels, so we got down and walked the last three hours. After a very long time a light appeared on the horizon, and, like all lights at night, seemed to recede as we approached. However, even night-farers do eventually make progress, and at long-last we drew up at the gate of the ramshackle, mud-walled square of a miserable *khan*. The door was barred and bolted, but our escort parleyed with the keeper, and we soon found ourselves in a filthy courtyard littered with sleeping Tartars and drooping ponies, the only available cover the four filthy little rooms of the gate-house. In one of these a smoky wick was burning in a tin of oil, and two men were poring over account books. We demanded to see the Commandant. One of the pair, a meek-looking bearded man, rose and answered in good English: "Well, sir, I was the Commandant until yesterday. The present Commandant is asleep upstairs." He was an Armenian, of course, and, like all the Armenians we met, a most kindly and obliging fellow, but broken.

We were tired and hungry, and insisted on seeing the Commandant. He turned out to be a well-nourished young man, his hair smooth as his manners, his podgy hands beringed, scented, silky, and resplendent in a frogged, fur-lined coat, which he wore over his night-shirt. He gave orders at once for food to be prepared, and we all sat down to await its arrival. Presently our Turkish officer arrived and joined us in his deliberate, ox-like way. It took over two hours to produce a meal, but the time passed pleasantly enough. Our flabby host was a regular young man about Bitlis, very ready to talk about himself and his achievements. Possibly he was somewhat flattered by this, his first meeting with British officers, and the condescension of his position in regard to them in spite of their superior rank. At any rate, he was graciously pleased to expound to us the immediate strategy of the War in Europe, its future course, and the date and results of its conclusion. He threw an entirely new light on the latter part of the Mesopotamian Campaign as influenced by his own achievements, the finale of which was an account of his escape from the last Thermopylæan stand at Ramadie by swimming the river at the head of his men.

At last the long-looked-for food appeared: black bread and a big bowl of barley-broth, into which we all dipped. Excellent stuff. Date-syrup and more black bread followed. By this time our host was in great fettle, and, to top up with, suddenly dived his hand behind a box in the corner and triumphantly produced a small bottle with the magic words "Eau de Vie." This was his last drop, and we did justice to it, share and share alike all round. Fair do's. The stuff

was a pretty vile sort of arrack, but warming enough, and had a great effect on the Commandant. He was full of protestations of friendship, meetings after the War, exploits of gallantry in a fairer field. Then he waxed confidential and gave us a great deal of professional advice, saying that when we had soldiered as long as he had we would recognise the soundness of it. (Ballast had, as a matter of plain fact, just six times his service.) Then he grew rather quarrelsome, and finally reached the sleepy stage, and was taken off to bed. It was now 2 A.M., and we rejoiced that we were pretty certain of considerable delay and a late start next morning, especially as we had been promised a good meat-meal before leaving. We were thoroughly ready for sleep ourselves, as we had not had a night's rest since we were captured. The earthen floor of the room was very filthy, and there was only one bench. But in a corner was a small, raised, brick dais, and the Armenian officer was most helpful. He not only got this brushed and cleaned, but insisted on lending us each a blanket of his own. The room had no windows and only one door, which was locked and had a double sentry just outside it. No chance of escape here. So we were off to sleep at once, and knew nothing more till nine o'clock in the morning.

The dope of the night before had evidently had its effect on our Mohamedan friends, for no attempt was made to worry us before then. We dallied over our toilets as much as possible; and, what with that and the right royal breakfast that was served, it was half-past ten before we got under way. Our hosts had been as good as their word of the night before, and gave us a breakfast of roast lamb, chupatties, and another generous bowl of barley-broth. A good whack of the two former articles was transferred to the growing store in our emergency bag.

We found the courtyard of the post full of Tartars and Arabs; and a good number of scattered individuals were visible moving steadily along the road, all in a westerly direction. Just outside the gate we stumbled on a small party of Germans. This gave us another chance of delay. They told us they were a wireless section, and obligingly furnished us with the latest details of the German advance in France. A little more time was taken up in persuading them to accept a message for British Headquarters which the Pilot wrote down, stating that we were unwounded and asking that our kit might be dropped. They demurred at this, but eventually took the message without making any promises: probably in order to get rid of us without further trouble. They refused to give us any news of the operations in progress. But we knew that the only wireless station thereabouts had been at the town we left at midday yesterday.

We decided to walk the first part of the march in order to keep our feet hard, although it meant having four extremely smelly Tartars in very close proximity, one on each side and two just behind, all always unpleasantly casual about handling their rifles. When riding the camels one was at least out of nose-shot of them. Half a mile on we came on a small mixed unit laagered by the side of the road, among them about twenty white men of various ranks. Three officers were standing together inspecting the outspanned animals. One, a cheerful lathy individual with a red goatee, after our first salutation, opened the ball with, "Well, have you heard the news from France? You're being properly smashed there." Next to him was a tall bearded man with thick spectacles and three ribbons—Gallipoli, Iron Cross, and a yellow and white which we did not know. There is something to be said for the systematic similarity in the general design of German medal ribbons, with their two white stripes on backgrounds of various colours; at least, it prevents the noisy polychromatic squabbles that are visible on the chests of many British officers to-day. They told us they were a Telegraph Detachment; but as they were busy and uncommunicative we were unable to waste much time here, so passed on. And at that time two magpies flew up on to the rocks. Magpies are not common in Mesopotamia.

A clatter of hoofs behind made us look round. It was a comic figure that was overtaking us, the complete German tourist of caricature: a monstrous cloth sunshade flapping wildly from the back of his flat cap, green spectacles, water-bottle, haversacks, map-case, revolver, strapped on all round him gear of all kinds which banged up and down on his flanks as he bumped perspiringly along. The whole outfit was insecurely balanced on top of a pair of bloated saddle-bags astride of a big grey mule, the latter being most inadequately controlled by a picketing chain secured to its headstall.

We called out "Good morning," and were promptly swept away by the blast of—nautical—language that followed. He had evidently learned his English in America, not in a Sunday-school. There was something particularly incongruous in the man's pink-and-white baby complexion and the blaspheny which poured forth as he leaned back to take in, hand over hand, his steering chain. In a mist of profanity he navigated his craft round in diminishing circles till he brought it to a standstill alongside of us, its head pulled round hard against his starboard knee.

It was an entertaining half hour that followed. Our breezy mariner was full of grievances, and far past the stage when he could refrain from the relief of unburdening himself. He had been set upon by the Arabs last night as the

Germans were evacuating the town, and only just escaped with his life and what he had on him. After three years in the place! Three years! And he hadn't been given a single decoration. Not a single one. Jealousy of superiors. And these ungrateful Arabs—after three years' experience of Germans to take the first opportunity of looting their quarters. Yes, and after three years' acquaintance to try to murder him. If he hadn't been so nippy he'd have been shot.

Yes, he reckoned he spoke English pretty slick. He had been skipper of a big Hamburg-Boston boat four years, until the war; had been navigating match-boxes on this paltry trickle (modesty, unfortunately, prevents reproduction of the extremely forcible metaphor he used here) of a river ever since. And now just when, at last, they had given him three motor-boats, and he had got two big guns safely down-stream, and landed below all correct, beggared if the whole lascivious lot hadn't been collared by the English Army.

His language was lurid; it was of a saltiness impossible to convey. But his cigarettes were unexceptionable. Anecdote, abuse, reminiscence poured forth to a continuous accompaniment of the most original and devastating blasphemy. The mule, however, was quite untroubled thereby, and continued to display that alert aloof air so characteristic of these animals. We left the Master-Mariner eventually in a haze of violent invective, rocking precariously on his high perch as he heaved furiously at his steering-chain, whilst the mule trotted diagonally, in bored indifference, towards the hills. And for all we know, he may still be thus occupied. At least, it is certain that he is swearing—swearing endlessly.

Two magpies flew across the road, and then another pair. A little farther on we passed through a big caravan of Arabs resting in the river-plain. They were a striking crowd, and all seemed to have new clothes on; all their camel gear also and saddle-bags looked fresh and clean. It gave them an unreal sort of theatrical appearance; and, most improbable of all, in the middle, three or four stately old Bedawin were walking about shading themselves under pink parasols!

All these strange omens, which would have struck the most ignorant Roman Legionary as sure presages of some impending act of the gods, passed before our sophisticated eyes merely in jesting-wise. Indeed, when one o'clock came, and we halted for fifteen minutes' rest on the river's edge, we had begun to feel our escape would now depend entirely on our own exertions.

We were here well over a hundred miles from the British front line we had left. The only things that could possibly reach us now were aeroplanes. And it would soon be getting a bit far for them. Moreover, no really practicable

plan of action for them was apparent, even if they should succeed in recognising us.

At this point the rocky hillside came steeply down to within a hundred yards of the river, and the narrow strip of plain between was covered with scattered bushes. Our escort had been getting more and more jumpy and truculent as the day progressed. Various causes had contributed to this. Their conversations with the people we had passed; the passage overhead of five of the abhorred "Tyara" half an hour previously; and, above all, a large party of mounted Tartars who had just hurried past us and galloped on ahead without stopping, only pausing to shout a few short sentences. So when the time for the halt came, it was with difficulty that we persuaded them to let us go down to the river's edge to wash our feet. They did eventually let us go under close escort of two men, one of whom amused himself by letting off his rifle into the water alongside of us. As we sat there, our covey of planes came back, high up; and one of them playfully loosed off a drum in the direction of our party before they all sailed away homewards. That was the last we should see of any of our own folk for many a long day. It about put the lid on the state of our feelings.

The camels, which we had decided to ride now, as it was getting hot, were grazing about twenty yards apart, and the usual *tamasha* took place in getting them to sit down. They got up as savagely as ever directly we were on. Most of the Tartars were collecting themselves and their kit after their "easy," when crack-cr-cr-cr-crack-crack-crack! went machine-gun fire at close quarters. There was just one moment of confusion amongst the escort bolting for the cover of the rocks a few yards away. That was enough for us. We were off the camels and racing through the scrub towards the river at once. Ballast was looking up for the aeroplane, when Pilot gripped his arm and turned him. There—on the road, only a hundred yards back, was a Lamb car. That hundred yards must have been covered in pretty near record time. Whilst the machine-gun was busy with our Tartar friends we tumbled into the leading car—*free*.

III.

The train of events had been as follows. The British operations had met with complete success. The whole Turkish Division had been rounded up — staff, foot, and guns. The Dolphins had got right across their line of retreat. The surrender had taken place, and the whole show was over by dawn of the day before. The Dolphins

had come over fifty miles in twenty-four hours. Not content with that, however, they shoved on another forty next day, reached the town, and scooped the whole of the Turkish ammunition dump there. Thence the Lambs had been pushed on, with orders to find us and bring us back—special petrol arrangements being made to give them a hundred miles' radius of action. Information in plenty had been available, and plans had been laid accordingly. These were put into practice so neatly and quietly that their opening burst of machine-gun fire was literally a bolt from the blue.

Our run of luck had been extraordinary all through: it was perhaps most phenomenal at the finish. If we had been marching at the time, if we had been on foot, if even we had not happened to have just mounted the camels with the slight consequent confusion that always resulted, we should certainly have been shot down by our guards before they cleared. Had not the place of our midday halt been a point where the hills come exceptionally near the river, so that the undulations gave some cover; or had there been no growth of scrub jungle there—the only such cover we had seen—the armoured cars could never have got up to us unobserved. Above all, success had depended on the extremely able way in which the Lamb Commander had grasped the situation and seized the exact psychological moment for action.

THE FRENCH RENAISSANCE.

BY CHARLES WHIBLEY.

THE English have lately been charged, officially, with neglecting the study of living languages, with shutting themselves up in insular arrogance, with being content to cast a grudging, transitory eye upon Latin and Greek, and to ignore the splendid achievements of the modern world. Mr Tilley's treatise upon 'The Dawn of the French Renaissance,'[1] therefore, comes to us at an opportune moment. It is welcome not only for the sound scholarship and admirable taste which it displays, but because it refutes a general and undeserved charge. The French and the English are approaching a mutual understanding by more paths than one. On either side the Channel the universities are proving a wise appreciation of the literature of their neighbours and Allies. And Mr Tilley has played his part well in studying profoundly a little-known period of French art.

In calling his book 'The Dawn of the French Renaissance,' Mr Tilley has accepted perforce the common terminology of the historians. Had he not accepted it, his purpose might have been obscure. But it would have been better for the proper understanding of literature that the word "Renaissance" had never been used. And, since it has been persistently opposed to the imagined "Dark Ages," it is responsible for a vast deal of error in history and criticism. "The ages are all equal," said William Blake, "but genius is always above its age." There is no wiser clue than that to lead us through the labyrinth of literature. And the term "Renaissance" was especially ill-chosen, because it implies re-birth after death, light out of darkness. The beauty and intelligence of the world did not die, and the darkest age was not without illumination. But happily there are signs to-day of a clearer interpretation. Pater, for instance, admits an earlier Renaissance than that of the fifteenth century, and traces the "outbreak of the human spirit" far into the Middle Age itself. We no longer believe with J. A. Symonds that "the arts and inventions, the knowledge and the books, which suddenly became vital at the time of the Renaissance, had long lain neglected on the shores of the Dead Sea which we call the Middle Ages." That was no Dead Sea upon which Chaucer, and Froissart, and Villon sailed their ships; the arts and in-

[1] 'The Dawn of the French Renaissance,' by Arthur Tilley, M.A. Cambridge: At the University Press.

ventions had not been forgotten on any shore frequented by the heroic builders of the Gothic cathedrals, by the artists of illuminated manuscripts and storied windows. No longer is the term "Gothic" a term of barbarous reproach. No longer does any sane critic involve in impenetrable darkness a thousand years of effort. Poets and architects differed, with the passage of time, in style and intention, but seldom was genius an outcast from the earth. And we shall best appreciate the wayward progress of the arts if we escape from the tyranny of periods, and repeat once more the saying of Blake: "The ages are all equal, but genius is always above its age."

Not even of a knowledge of classical literature may what is known as the Renaissance claim an exclusive possession. The Court of Charlemagne took a just pride in its writers of prose and poetry, and showed an enthusiastic delight in the classical models which were before it. Alcuin and his fellows were humanists, despite their ignorance of Greek. Virgil and Lucretius they knew, and they could not if they would escape the influence of Plato at second-hand. As Mr W. P. Ker says, "the paradox of the Dark Ages is that this period, which at first seems to be so distinctly marked as a gap and interval between the ancient and modern worlds, is in its educational work and general culture both ancient and modern. Most of the intellectual things on which it set most store are derived, on the one hand, from ancient Greece, and on the other are found surviving as respectable commonplaces, scarcely damaged, in the Augustan Ages of Louis XIV. and Queen Anne."

And if the danger of dividing up the world of poetry and intellect into arbitrary periods needed confirmation, it could be afforded by Mr Tilley's own book. He chooses the year 1494 to mark the Renaissance in France. It is then that he sees upon the eastern horizon the first glimmer of the dawn. On September the 2nd Charles VIII. crossed the Alps; seven days later he arrived at Asti; and from that time Guicciardini dates the beginning of "the innumerable calamities" which overwhelmed his country. At Asti it was that an attempt was made to dissuade Charles VIII. from his expedition, and it was at this dramatic moment that, in Mr Tilley's view, the French Renaissance began. But Mr Tilley himself is beset by doubts. He deals, in one of the most interesting chapters of his book, with the "premonitions" of this Renaissance. He admits that the Princes of the House of Valois had encouraged learning more than a hundred and fifty years before the adventurous journey of Charles VIII. The library of Charles V. was famous, and his brother Jean, Duc de Berry, surpassed him in the justice and opulence of his taste. In 1396, says Renan, cited by Mr

Tilley, "on se croirait à deux pas de la Renaissance dont on est separé par plus d'un siècle." But how were they separated from the Renaissance, who were already familiar with the works of Aristotle and Plato, of Ovid and Lucan, of Virgil and Terence, of Seneca and Valerius Maximus? These are authors enough upon which to base the claim of humanism, and if there were no enlightened sovereign to take up the work of patronage when Charles V. laid it down, if a period of warfare interrupted the study of letters, those were the accidents of history, and they do not change the spirit and temper of the time.

Moreover, the greatest names mentioned in Mr Tilley's book belong in point of time to what are still called the Middle Ages. Alain Chartier, though he was born before the end of the fourteenth century, is a devout student of the ancients. Seneca was his model, both in the style and in the search after moral commonplaces, and he wrote a prose which is classical in both senses. Nor can we drive into the obscurity of barbarism the witty cynicism of Charles d'Orléans, the gaiety of the 'Cent Nouvelles nouvelles,' or the closely observed reality of that mordant little masterpiece, 'Les Quinze Joyes de Mariage.' Whencever the inspiration of these works came, it did not come from the darkness of ignorance. Their authors loved the light and lived in it. They clamoured from no re-birth, for the seeds of death were not in them. They had the genius which was above its age.

The poet comes and goes as he chooses, recking little of the "movements" which it is the historian's business to note. Villon disappears from knowledge thirty years before Mr Tilley marks the beginning of the French Renaissance, and yet he belongs not to the Middle Ages but to all time. Villon is a modern of the moderns, because he speaks to us in his own voice of beauty and sincerity. It is true that he knew no Greek, and only such Latin as he might pick up in the University of Paris; but he was no worse off than Keats; and the one recked as little as the other of any movement in history or literature. The flame of genius burned clearly within each of them, and makes them part of the universal inheritance. Had Villon been rich in all the knowledge that was being gathered in his day on the other side of the Alps, he could not have turned to better account the life of the tavern and the prison, as he knew it. That he knew that life better than any other was an accident. What was essential to him was the poet's genius. He had no greater need to learn than had Keats, for being a poet he divined all things. With equal passion and pathos he could write a ballade for his mother, *pour prier nostre dame*—

> "Femme je suis povrette et ancienne,
> Ne riens ne sçay; oncques lettre me leuz,"

or describe the regrets of La Belle Heaulmiaire—

"Ainsi le bon temps regretons
Entre nous, pauvres vieilles sottes,
Assises bas, à croppetons
Tout en ung tas comme pelottes,
A petit feu de chevenottes,
Tost allumées, tost estainctes ;
Et jadis fusmes si mignottes !
Ainsi en prend à maintz et maintes."

And it should be remembered that Clement Marot, the first of the poets to win a place in the French Renaissance, was the editor and panegyrist of Villon. The works of Villon, said he, are "of such an art, so full of good doctrine, and so finely painted in a thousand beautiful colours, that time, which effaces all, has not effaced them, and still less shall it efface them presently and hereafter, when the good writings of France shall be better known and collected." This is a noble tribute composed by a poet who has been placed by the historians on the other side of the hedge, and yet urged the young poets of his time to cull Villon's sentences like beautiful flowers.

Truly, the poets who followed Villon may have been nearer to the Renaissance; truly, also, they are farther from poetry. So much is said, not in any opposition to Mr Tilley, but to suggest that too great a burden should not be laid upon a convenient word. Nor can it be said that the Chronicle of Comines was conceived and written in the outer darkness of barbarism. It does not recall to mind the shores of the Dead Sea. In spite of the fact that it belongs to the time which was before Charles VIII.'s visit to Italy, it seems still a fresh and living book. To dismiss it as "mediæval" is to misunderstand its scope and purpose. It is far nearer to our own time and to universal acceptance, for instance, than the Chronicles of Stow and Speed, which it preceded by a century. There is nothing of the spirit of the "big gooseberry" about it. Comines is singularly free from the vice of anecdotage. He is no gossip bent upon whiling away an idle hour. He is a statesman as well as a historian, and it was his intention not only to celebrate the genius of his master, Louis XI., but to set forth a sound method of statecraft. His love of character and his passion for politics separate him sharply from the chroniclers. He sketches, with a keen perception, the kings of his times, and also the countries. He finds that the English are choleric, after the fashion of those who inhabit cold countries, that they hunt fiercely after offices and estates, that with them everything is in extreme, that they lack discretion and are not so subtle in treaties as the French. He notes in the Italians a love of change, jealousy, and avarice. He says that it is in their nature to favour the stronger side, and that the best that may be expected from them is neutrality. Towards men as towards peoples he strives to be just. He spent the greater part of his active life in opposition to the Duke of Burgundy, once his master; and he sketches his character without a hint of malevolence. Even though

he deplores the Duke's lack of wisdom, he praises unstintingly his noble qualities. "Undoubtedly," says he, "he was endued with many goodly virtues, for never was Prince more desirous to entertain noble men and to keep them in good order than he. His liberality seemed not great, because he made all men partakers thereof. Never Prince gave audience more willingly to his servants and subjects than he. While I served him he was not cruel, but grew marvellous cruel towards his end, which was a sign of short life. . . . Covetous he was of glory, which was the chief cause which made him move so many wars, for he desired to imitate those ancient Princes whose fame continueth till this present. Lastly, hardy was he and a valiant, as any man that lived in his time, but all his great enterprises and attempts ended with himself and turned to his own loss and dishonour, for honour goeth ever with the victory." Honour goeth ever with the victory — that is a true saying, true to-day as when it was written, and it is a saying which we should do well to ponder now, when a German victory would establish upon a firm foundation "honour rooted in dishonour."

Comines is just not only to the Duke of Burgundy. He is just also to Edward IV. of England, whom he finds the handsomest and most munificent prince that ever he saw, though too much inclined to take his ease. But the hero of his life and book is Louis XI. He recognised the heavy burden which was laid upon him. "I knew this mighty king," he wrote, "and served him in the flower of his age, and in his great prosperity; yet never saw I him free from toil of body and trouble of mind." He praises his policy and his conduct, noting that he was always ready to humble himself at the call of wisdom, for "when pride rideth before, shame and damage follow after." A king, modest in prosperity, brave in adversity, he knew whom he ought to fear, and was free from panic. So he gave his life to the profit of France, and dreamed of emulating Charlemagne, whom he thought he resembled, as many lesser men since have thought they resembled Napoleon. And Comines sketches his superstitions and his craft and his cruelties, leaving the balance of good always upon the right side, until he comes to his death at his castle of Plessis. "After all these fears, sorrows, and suspicions," he writes, "God (according to His accustomed goodness) wrought a miracle upon him, healing him both in soul and body, for He took him out of this miserable world, being perfect of sense, understanding, and memory, having received all his sacraments, without all grief to man's judgment, and talking continually even within a *Pater Noster* while of his death."

Such is the writer who Mr Tilley, following Brunetière, says, "had nothing in him of the Renaissance." If this be

true, it is true also that Comines has what is far greater—a universality of interest. He is part of the world's inheritance. He is read to-day not only by those whose business it is to study the records of history, but by those who care for the literary expression of character. Whether he was an artist in words or not, it is certain that his style fits his matter perfectly. He wrote always as a man of affairs, and produced the effect of a pious, practical statesmanship, at which he aimed. What Montaigne wrote in his own copy is true enough. Here it is in Florio's English: "In him you shall find a pleasing-sweet and gently-gliding speech, fraught with a purely-sincere simplicity, his narration pure and unaffected, and wherein the Author's unspotted good meaning doth evidently appear, void of all manner of vanity or ostentation speaking of himself, and free from all affection or envy speaking of others." That is high praise from a wise judge, and it admits Comines into the company of the elect. But, says Mr Tilley, Comines' religion is "the simple, inconsistent, unspiritual religion of the ordinary mediæval man." Now, it is true that for Comines God is the only ruler of Princes. He believes that whatever is done in this world is done with God's sanction and approval. At the very moment that he sets forth the value of archers to an army, he insists that "God shows battles are in His hand." Even Louis XI. is but a favoured puppet of the Deity. But this simple reverence is not exclusively mediæval. It has belonged and will always belong to statesmen and soldiers of a certain type. Comines and his master were, like Cromwell, "practical mystics," and with the best will in the world we cannot put Cromwell back into the Middle Ages. And even to-day we find leaders, on either side, invoking God to fight their battles for them, and the invocation is hypocritical only in those who make their Deity responsible for their own flagrant misdeeds.

It is one of the puzzles of history that Comines and Machiavelli were writing at the same time, in ignorance of each other's purpose, treatises which dealt with the duties and ambitions of Princes. That Machiavelli saw more deeply into the sequence and purposes of events, that he had a wider outlook into the past, is obviously true. But his superiority came not from a difference in sympathy or period from Comines, but from his own genius and temperament. After his own fashion, Comines attempted to construct that which came easily to Machiavelli—a philosophy of statecraft. He would, if he could, have regulated the friendships of sovereigns; he defined the duties of ambassadors and spies, and he glorified wisdom and suspicion. "Think you," he asks, "that God hath established the office

of a King or a Prince to be executed by such beasts as glory in saying: I am no scholar; I trust my Council well enough, and refer all matters to them, and so without further answer depart to their sports and pastimes?" That was not the kingly part, as Comines wished to see it played; and though he lacked the profound knowledge and the supreme intelligence of Machiavelli, he was busy with the same work as engrossed the author of 'The Prince.' Nor did he go without recognition. His book became the breviary of kings before it ever saw the dignity of print. Charles V. carried it with him always; and Francis I. disapproved of its appearance in type, because he thought it should remain the exclusive property of kings.

Thus it seems a small matter whether we should place Comines in a pen labelled "Renaissance" or not. The truth is that Villon and Comines on the one hand, Ronsard and Rabelais on the other, belong all to the same age—the age of genius. And it is noteworthy that all that came between them in the literature of France has little other merit than the merit of curiosity. And this is the result not of the old spirit nor of the new, not of schools or periods, but the result of the accidents which decreed that Villon and Comines, Ronsard and Rabelais, should be born in France at the times in which they were. Thus, again, we find an illustration of Blake's saying that genius is above its age, and are content.

Of the intervening period of the Dawn of the Renaissance Mr Tilley has given us an admirable account, which is all the more welcome because it is a period seldom relieved by great names. With a scholarly hand he has sketched the rise of humanism in France, and has given us deft portraits of Gaguin, the student of Latin, of Jacques Lefèvre d'Étaples, the Aristotelian and restorer of philosophy, of whom a panegyrist says: "He came forth like the rising sun to dissipate the darkness and arouse the youth of France from its deep lethargy. He was the first to shed the light of purer learning on liberal studies, and to raise them from their fallen state to a place of honour." And so he passes to Guillaume Budé, the accomplished Grecian, the stalwart champion of scholarship in France, the author of 'De Asse,' and the correspondent of Rabelais. Then he describes the work which Erasmus, the greatest teacher and inspirer of Europe, did for humanism in France. "The New Learning was for Erasmus an instrument of life," says Mr Tilley, in an excellent passage. "This clear conception of the uses of Pagan literature for a Christian society was of the greatest service to France. For a large proportion of the early French humanists, under the influence of their theological training, had an uneasy misgiving as

to the fitness of pagan literature for the education of a Christian. Some, indeed, found relief in the theory that ancient literature was an allegory. But Erasmus taught them a truer view, that it is the moral seriousness of the best pagan literature that makes it a fitting instrument of Christian education." That is wisely said, and our debt to Erasmus is not yet paid. We still owe much of our scholarship to his prudent teaching and good example, and if, obedient to clamour, we now throw away what he taught us, we shall show ourselves ungrateful to the greatest man of letters of his time.

It is not Mr Tilley's fault that, when he leaves scholarship for the field of literature, he is forced to admit its barrenness. The dawn of the literary Renaissance in France was grey indeed. Such poets as there were called themselves very properly *rhétoriquers*. Their works were formal to insipidity, and of all the writers of the time only Lemaire de Bruges, to whom Mr Tilley rightly traces a debt in Rabelais, is worth remembrance. Thus it is in French scholarship that the effects of humanism were earliest and most clearly seen. In no other domain of human energy was so fearless a champion of the new learning and the new taste as Guillaume Budé. In the face of manifold difficulties he became most learned in Greek. The only teacher he had was the incompetent Hermonymus. "I found an old Greek," thus he tells his tale, "or rather he found me, for I paid him a large fee, who could do little more than converse in literary language. But he pronounced and read excellently, and as I heard he was the only Greek in France, I thought him extremely learned. Moreover, he succeeded in exciting my ardour for study by introducing me to Homer and to the names of some other writers." And then came the intercourse with Italy, and the ready access to Greek manuscripts; and Budé spared neither money in buying books nor time in reading them. He took no holidays, and packed into one day the work of a day and a half. His debt to Italy, then, can be easily measured. The arts of architecture and sculpture made a tardier, vaguer entrance into France. The French builders, the masters of their own craft, were naturally disinclined to accept the new fashions of Italy. But gradually Italian artificers made their way across the Alps, and at Amboise and elsewhere gave instruction to the craftsmen of France. The wonderful *châteaux*, which were built from end to end of France, were no longer fortresses; they served not for defence but for the grace of a well-ordered life, and the classical influence, slight though it be, was already upon them. "This contact of the old style with the new," says Mr Tilley, "of French master-masons and workmen, supported by tradition and public sentiment, with Italian architects and decora-

tors under royal patronage, resulted in a blending of the two styles, in which at first Gothic had by far the larger share." But gradually the Italian taste encroached upon the ancient prejudices, and though France always interpreted the new style in her own way, she at last accepted the lessons in architecture which her neighbours had to teach with a whole heart.

As you read Mr Tilley's pages, a pageant of beauty passes before your eyes. The French, who would gladly teach, would always gladly learn. The civilised countries of Europe many centuries ago made an artistic alliance, which has never been broken. Germany has ever lain outside our borders, artistic and moral, as it is outside them to-day. But France, England, and Italy have shared the same ideas, have shared the same movements. In the early days of humanism Erasmus visited London and Cambridge, as well as Paris and Orleans. He held in a single chain the learned men of Europe. He fought for the Greeks against the Trojans with equal force on either side the Channel. And when Italy imposed the new rules of architecture upon France, she imposed them also, with a lighter hand, upon England. But if in the arts of building and painting we have shown our insularity, if, accepting certain influences, we have gone on our own way, if our houses and our furniture always bear an impress which is neither French nor Italian, our literature has not seldom followed the common road. Sometimes we have followed the fashion of France, sometimes France has followed our fashion. The debt which Chaucer owed to the French we have since repaid with interest. What would the great romantic movement have been had France lacked the encouragement of England? Who shall estimate the influence of Walter Scott and Byron upon the Frenchmen of 1830?

And loyally have we exchanged masterpieces. If Shakespeare for some centuries fought a losing battle in France, he has won the victory at last, and no poet is more generously appreciated than he across the Channel. The Germans make his works an excuse for cumbrous annotation or false patriotism. They overload him with commentary, or they claim him, insolently, for their own. The French recognise him as a poet, and do their best to understand him. Who, for instance, has written of late more wisely about Shakespeare than M. André Suarès? And we in return have annexed Rabelais, by right of conquest. Not only have we studied his merry book with goodwill and understanding, but in Sir Thomas Urquhart's version we have come near to matching the style of the original. Florio, moreover, has made Montaigne a true Englishman, and we gladly remember that he carried in his veins a few drops of English blood, that he once listened to

the discourses of the rugged George Buchanan. Nor can we keep an exclusive hand upon Defoe, whose 'Robinson Crusoe' was but a year old when he began to delight the children of France, and whose 'Moll Flanders' found at last a perfect interpreter in Marcel Schwöb, scholar and man of letters. And have we not given our Dickens in exchange for Dumas? Some writers there are who will not cross the Channel. The works of Swift, we are told, lose their force and meaning when they reach Calais; and Racine, for a very different reason, is not always treated in London with the respect which his beauty and order deserve. But these and other exceptions, due to different temperaments and different trainings, are of small account. And even they will disappear with a wider sympathy and a deeper study. The truth is that the Alliance, which holds together France and Italy and England, is an alliance not only of arms but of arts, and it will last long after the signing of the peace. None of the three will close its ears or its eyes to the influence in art or learning of the other two. And such works of research as Mr Tilley's, reciprocated in France by English studies, no less intelligent and profound, will strengthen the bonds, already strong, which unite us with our friends and our allies.

ESCAPED!

ADVENTURES IN GERMAN CAPTIVITY.

BY WALLACE ELLISON.

III.

"Sam," said Mr Pickwick, after a little hesitation; "listen to what I am going to say, Sam."

"Cert'nly, sir," rejoined Mr Weller; "fire away, sir."

"I have felt from the first, Sam," said Mr Pickwick with much solemnity, "that this is not the place to bring a young man to."

"Nor an old un neither, sir," observed Mr Weller.

"You're quite right, Sam," said Mr Pickwick. . . . "It is better for those young men, in every point of view, that they should not remain here."

THAT is how Mr Pickwick and Sam Weller felt about the Fleet Prison, and that is exactly how I felt, as time went on, about the Stadt Vogtei Prison in Berlin. The prison was most emphatically not the place to bring a young man to, and it was better, I felt, in every point of view, that I should not remain there.

We had failed, it is true, in our attempt to get out, but if we had done nothing else, we had at any rate demonstrated the practicability of our theory. The prison was not escape-proof. So much was certain.

As winter was approaching, it behoved us to set to work as soon as possible on fresh plans. The winters in Germany are severe, and we felt that it would be courting disaster to set out, in very cold weather, on an escape which might involve much lying out in the open. To be seen during the day in the danger zone near the frontier would be fatal to success, and, in view of the measures which were being taken by the German military and police authorities to recapture escapers, it would be equally fatal to leave the train at a station sufficiently close to the frontier to enable us to cross the same night.

We abandoned one scheme after the other on the ground of its impracticability.

One afternoon I was coming up the wearisome flights of stairs which led up to our cell on the fourth floor, when I was accosted in a furtive fashion by a man, S——. He was a queer fellow, an engineer by profession, a bigamist, I believe, by sheer force of habit, and as far as nationality was concerned an out and out cosmopolitan. Interned as an Englishman, he had been brought to the prison from Ruhleben Camp on some charge or other, and had been frequently heard to say that he was determined to escape. He had lived a long time in South Africa, Belgium, and Germany, spoke excellent

German, fair Flemish, indifferent French, and abominable English. I had known for some time that he wished to see me, but I had deliberately avoided meeting him, because I doubted the sincerity of his desire to escape, and, in any event, was pledged to my friends. On this particular occasion, however, there was no escape from him, and, impelled too by curiosity as to what his plans might be, I followed him into his cell. I soon came to the conclusion that his desire to escape was genuine. There was the prospect before him of a long prison sentence, and he was bent upon cheating the police of their prey. I listened as he unfolded his schemes, talking little myself, except occasionally to drop a word of criticism or ask a question.

When he had finished I told him that I thought his scheme unsound, and gave my reasons. He shrugged his shoulders and sat very disconsolately on his stool, with his hands spread out on his knees.

"Well, what do *you* think is the best plan? Have *you* a better idea?" he asked.

With very little seriousness in my words I said—

"Yes; I think I have. Find some way of getting out of the front door, out of the main exit."

He grew serious. We discussed possibilities for a while, and then I left him.

Although I had made the suggestion with a serious face I meant it mainly as a joke, but the idea struck root in his ingenious mind, and it was through the main door that we escaped from the prison about three weeks later.

In the narration of this escape I am free to give fairly full details of what took place, partly owing to the fact that all who participated in it are now in safety, thanks either to subsequent escape or release, and also because the escape was undertaken in such a way that the German authorities learned very soon afterwards the lines on which we had worked. Conditions in the prison were changed immediately after our escape was discovered, and steps were taken to cut off the main exit for ever afterwards as a possible avenue of escape. The interned were no longer permitted to use the yard at any time from 9 A.M. to 6 P.M. when not in solitary confinement, but were passed in by the sentry at stated times, the yard door being kept locked by him.

All the courtyards in the prison are inside the huge block of buildings. There is no wall fencing in the prison from the street. One steps at once from the street into the gloom of the jail through heavy oaken doors. The first step takes one into a sort of vestibule. Facing the outer doors, inside the vestibule, are other oaken doors leading into the exercise-yard for our part of the prison. To the left of the entrance are two steps and then a corridor not more than twenty paces in length leading into the administrative office. The office is used by the

lieutenant, sergeant, warders, and corporals who guard the prisoners. To the right of the entrance is another corridor, but in our time the door leading into it from the vestibule was usually closed and locked. Along the two corridors mentioned were, on the one side, heavily barred non-transparent windows giving on to the Dircksen Strasse, and on the other side the doors of cells on the ground floor. The third cell along the corridor to the left of the entrance was the porter's cell, where a German corporal armed with bayonet and Browning revolver was kept on guard day and night. After our escape the first cell was made the porter's cell, and a special window was built into the wall, so that when fitted with an ingenious arrangement of mirrors the sentry could see at once if any one attempted to open the main door. Each time we escaped quite a lot of Prussian officials were kept busy trying to catch us, and, when they had locked us up again, trying to devise ways and means of preventing another attempt. I suppose it all belonged to the conduct of war, and that we may have been "doing our bit" after all, "tying up" and annoying an infinitesimal part of the Kaiser's army for a day or two!

From the description I have given of the prison inside the main gate, it will be obvious that in attempting to open the main door certain risks would have to be faced. There would always be the possibility of being seen by the sentry in the cell close to the main gate. There was the danger of persons coming from the yard into the vestibule. There was the risk of the door of the administrative office—twenty paces along the straight corridor—being opened, when all would be lost, owing to the fact that a German corporal, and frequently the lieutenant in charge of the jail, sat at their desks in such a position as to command an uninterrupted view of the main entrance. At any moment the door on the right-hand side of the main gate, the one leading into the right-hand portion of the prison, might be opened by a warder passing through; and finally, there came the risk—against which all the forethought in the world would not enable us to guard—of a transport of prisoners arriving at the door at the very moment of our escape. To a certain extent, by means of a careful disposition of forces, and by a rehearsal of the right sort of story to tell, in the event of being surprised before we had actually opened the door, we thought it possible to guard against all risks except the last. There we should have to take a sporting chance.

One afternoon, when I entered our cell after an aimless walk through the smelly, monotonous galleries, I was accosted by one of my cell companions, who said to me—

"G—— has been here to see you, and would like you to go down to his cell before lock-

ing-up time, as he has some sketches he would like to show to you."

I smiled, and my friend smiled. G—— had escaped some time before from Ruhleben Camp, along with his friend C——, and, possessing the two invaluable assets, from an escaper's point of view, of a perfect command of the language, and a thorough knowledge of the country and the ways of the people, they succeeded in reaching the Swiss frontier, passed over during the day, but unfortunately, unwittingly walked back into Germany, and were arrested by two German sentries. They had not taken into account that they had crossed the German-Swiss frontier at a point where a narrow tongue of Swiss territory runs into Germany. They had walked into freedom on one side of the tongue and back into bondage on the other side. He and his friend were charged, after capture, with having attempted to bribe the German guards who accompanied them from the Swiss frontier to the Stadt Vogtei Prison in Berlin, and both men, I knew, were eager to avoid the long term of imprisonment which would surely be the consequence of conviction in the Berlin Police Court. At a later date, C——, G——'s companion—after G—— had made good his escape—was tried on a charge of attempted bribery, and sentenced to six months' imprisonment. He showed me a copy of the judgment, in which the judge who had tried the case had put his signature to the following astounding sentence:—

"It must not be overlooked that the crime committed by the defendant is a direct consequence of his internment, but it must also be borne in mind that he belongs to that nation which is responsible for this war, and an offence of this character must be proceeded against with the very utmost severity of the law (*muss mit der unbedingtsten Schroffheit der Gesetze entgegengetreten werden*)."

C——, who had lived thirty-five years in Germany, had been decidedly pro-German in his sympathies for some time after the outbreak of war, but if he had not become anti-German before the date of his trial, he certainly swung round when he found himself face to face with so wicked a mockery of the very elements of justice.

I say that I smiled when I heard that G—— had been to see me and wished to show me sketches. I went down to his cell, and had not been in conversation with him long before I learned that he had certain proposals to make to me regarding escape from the prison. He said that three, including S——, had decided to escape through the main door, that a duplicate key was almost ready, and all that remained to be done before the night of the escape was to make perfectly sure that the key would fit. While the stage rehearsals were going on, one man was to hold the door leading from the exercise-yard into the vestibule, in order that no one

should come in from that direction. Two others were to stand to the left of the main door on the two steps leading into the corridor, at the end of which was the administrative office, and were to indulge in casual conversation in a nonchalant fashion, drowning any noise the key might make when turned in the lock, and so prevent the suspicions of the sentry, in his cell close by, being aroused. They were a man short, and I was asked whether I would undertake to help them with the rehearsals, and also on their real escape, by holding the door leading to the vestibule from the exercise-yard. At that stage it was not suggested that I should become one of the escaping party. My functions were simply to hold the door, and as soon as the three had escaped, rush upstairs to my cell. I smiled at so naïve a request, by acceding to which I should be running all the risks and enjoying precious little of the fun. I told him so, whereupon he invited me to come with them. We discussed plans in full detail, and I finally obtained permission to co-opt my friend Eric Keith, to whom I was pledged.

Keith and I did not definitely decide to escape with the three until the last moment, though we made all necessary preparations for such an eventuality, and, having been taken fully into confidence, we felt it only right to volunteer to help them in trying the key.

We had some amusing and rather exciting rehearsals. S—— was the man who had had the key made, and to him fell the honour of testing it. G——, Keith, and I stood on the steps and talked in as nonchalant a fashion as we could, while the fifth man held the other door.

S——, doubtless spurred on by his fear of approaching punishment, was very daring but very excitable, and throughout the series of rehearsals in which we participated we were never quite sure whether the key was a misfit, or whether he had failed to make the key turn in the lock because of the trembling of his hands. I have often smiled since at the recollection of how he would turn away from the door and follow us upstairs, muttering in his queer English under his breath—

"'E will go! 'E will go! I know 'e will go," meaning that the key would eventually fit.

After three unsuccessful tests, we hit upon the idea of covering the wards of the key with a thin film of candle-wax, in order that when the key was turned in the lock any obstacle it met would leave the imprint of its shape on the film of wax. That portion of the key had then simply to be filed away.

The fourth test was successful. We did not escape that night, because certain other preparations were not yet complete. We met in many places for the purpose of discussing plans, and finally decided to make the attempt between half-past five and six, on

the evening of the 16th of November 1916.

That day, about a quarter of an hour before our rendezvous with our fellow-conspirators in the exercise-yard, Keith and I decided that we would join the rest in escaping from the prison, and then, in all likelihood, endeavour to escape from the country on our own initiative. We put on our warmest overcoats, and, as we were stuffing into our pockets certain impedimenta we should require on the way, Keith looked at me and said—

"I suppose you are not overlooking the fact that we may both be dead men within a quarter of an hour?"

I nodded. I guessed that he was referring to the possibility of our being shot by the sentry at the very moment of passing through the door, or crossing the street.

It was about half-past five in the evening, and already dark when we entered the yard. We found our fellow-conspirators walking round and round the narrow confine—less than seventy paces round its outer edge—with a most hang-dog look, which would have been intensely amusing had not the whole matter been too serious for laughter. We postponed the laugh for the time being. We joined them once or twice, when whispered consultations took place.

Our first move on arriving in the yard was to ascertain who was the corporal on duty inside the main entrance. We saw to our dismay that he was a German corporal, named Behnert, who, we knew, had insisted upon being furnished with a Browning revolver if he accepted sentry duty there, and he had boasted on one occasion that he would shoot dead on the spot any man whom he found trying to escape through the main door. I confess that this made me feel very uncomfortable, and I think all my confederates, except S——, who was astoundingly determined, felt that we were running enough risks already without facing this additional and very grave one. S——'s determination, however, made us feel ashamed of our nervousness, and with some misgivings we decided to carry on. During the suspense of waiting until the coast was clear, I candidly confess that I did not feel as cool as the proverbial cucumber. The really trying part of an adventure of this kind is not the strain of doing things, but the nerve-trying ordeal of *waiting* to do things.

The yard was crowded when we entered, but shortly afterwards the cry "Essenholen!" rang through the building, and most of the Poles left in order to receive the prison skilly in their cells. We waited until we were almost alone in the yard. Then one of our number opened the door leading into the vestibule, in order to reconnoitre and see that the coast was clear. Evidently the vestibule was empty, for he signalled to the rest to follow. Once inside the vestibule, Keith, G——, and I took up our posts and started a conversation, with a view, as I have said

above, of shielding S—— from any one looking down the corridor from the office, and also with the intention of drowning the sound of the key being turned in the lock. Another man held the door leading from the yard. Keith and I had our suspicions aroused by the presence of a sixth man, as apparently a passive spectator. This man, I knew, was an interned German, who had been running a gambling-hell in Berlin which had shortly before been raided by the police. It was too late, however, to make any protest. S—— had already inserted the key in the lock. We waited and watched, our nerves tense with excitement. The key would not turn. There was no time for another trial. We dared not linger longer, and followed him back into the yard. Keith and I charged him with a breach of faith in admitting a sixth man without having first secured our consent, but he assured us that the man was all right, and in any case had not the intention of leaving Berlin after his escape from the prison. As to his failure to open the door, he thought that in the excitement of the moment he had put in the shank crookedly, though he swore that the key would fit.

"'E will go! I know 'e will go!"

We fell to pacing the yard again, for we had become ill at ease and our minds were filled with a vague fear that our failure to open the door at the crucial moment might perhaps be an omen of approaching disaster. In other words, it is just possible that we had a touch of "cold feet." We had had too much prison to be in first-class escaping condition.

Presently one of our number looked again into the vestibule, and came back with an expression of undisguised disgust on his face.

"The soldiers have just brought in the food for the remand prisoners in the military part of the prison, and their cart fills the vestibule."

"That's bad! They will not take the cart away until well after locking-up time, and they usually leave a sentry beside it," I said. "It seems as though escape is out of the question to-night."

S—— left us in order to reconnoitre.

He came back and said, in an excited whisper—

"Come on! Dere's no soldier dere. De cart was up against de door, but I have shoved him back. Dere's room to get out now. Come on."

Away we went once more into the vestibule and took our appointed places. S—— glanced round before he put the key into the lock. The coast was clear. While he was opening the door the Lieutenant's orderly passed into the office, but we were covering S—— and he noticed nothing unusual. We were close to the sentry's cell, but he did not stir. Perhaps our casual conversation served, as we intended it should, to drown the noise made by the turning of the key in the lock.

Wonder of wonders, the door

opened! S—— swiftly withdrew the key, and without glancing round slipped out into the street. We followed, one by one, Keith and I coming last.

The arrangement had been that we should on no account run lest we should arouse the suspicions of any one passing by, but for a second or two we all clean forgot the arrangement and ran. Happily, the street was fairly empty. Thirty or forty paces to the left of the exit was a side street. All, except Keith and me, made for the street in order to jump on to the first tram-car. We, however, had decided to cut adrift from the rest, and slowing down, we crossed the street, trying hard to walk as unconcernedly as though we had never known the inside of a jail.

It was a queer feeling that came over one. It seemed beyond belief that we had at last succeeded in escaping from the hated place, and every second we were conscious that a bullet might hit us square between the shoulder-blades. Crossing the Dircksen Strasse diagonally to the left, we came to a railway arch and passed through, feeling a good deal easier, though conscious still that we were not yet safe from pursuit. Only when we had turned round two other corners did we feel any real relief from the great tension. By that time we were lost. Neither of us knew Berlin well, but we wandered on, conscious of a tremor as we passed a policeman, fearing lest he should ask for our military papers. Before long we found ourselves in the famous Unter den Linden near the Dom, and, as we discovered later, passed quite close by the Berlin *Kommandantur*.

We had arranged a rendezvous with S—— and G—— in the Wilhelms Hallen Restaurant, near the Zoological Gardens Station, and, after inquiry from several people, we managed to find a tram which took us there. It was late at night, and we did not see a great deal of street life in Berlin. On arrival at the restaurant, which was quite a fashionable one, we found our two confederates waiting for us, and sat down to drink beer, smoke cigarettes, and discuss plans. S—— had in his possession a receipt for some very necessary articles of ours which had somehow or other found their way from prison to a certain place in Berlin. We here made the fatal error of trusting our accomplice to too great an extent. He suggested that we should meet again at ten in the Café Josty, opposite the Wilhelms Hallen Restaurant, and said that he would arrange in the meantime to find us quarters for the night. We had no papers, and therefore thought it unwise in the extreme to endeavour to procure a room in any hotel. In the meantime Keith and I were to go off, before the shops closed, to make certain necessary purchases for our final tramp to the frontier. We left, and went straight to a kind of Harrod's or Selfridge's

—the Kaufhaus des Westens —in one of the principal thoroughfares of Berlin, the Tauentzienstrasse, and there bought such things as rucksacks, water-bottles, and two very shoddy-looking sleeping sacks. The latter, we had decided, were absolutely essential, if our plans involved our spending one day or more lying out in the open.

The weather was bitterly cold, and it seemed likely that we should have snow. While we were making these purchases from a shopgirl, on one of the upper floors, a shopwalker came along and addressed us.

"These things going to the Front, gentlemen?" he inquired quite affably.

"Yes," said my friend, who spoke perfect German. "As a matter of fact, we are off soon to Roumania." (We had heard of the big German offensive against Roumania which was taking place just about that time.)

"There, at any rate," added Keith, "we are making pretty rapid progress."

"Yes," said the shopwalker, with an eloquent shrug of the shoulders and a most sad intonation. "But the d——d English! Every time we come up against them, things seem to go wrong."

We agreed, of course, that the English were a particularly obnoxious people. Our friend the enemy seemed to be thoroughly weary of the war. We did not spend too much time in conversation with him.

We made no attempt to buy food, because we thought we should have sufficient in the parcel we hoped to procure with the receipt we should get from S——. We bought a large, cheap suit-case big enough to contain all our purchases, and went from the Kaufhaus des Westens direct to the Zoological Gardens Station, in order to deposit our luggage there and call for it later in the evening. Keith took charge of the receipt. About nine o'clock we accidentally met S—— and G——in front of the Café Josty, and reminded them of the appointment in the café at ten o'clock. They promised to be there.

We spent some time walking about the streets trying to kill time, but finding things rather monotonous we went into the café somewhat earlier than we had intended, and, ordering two cups of coffee, which we suspected was brewed from acorns, and was served without milk or sugar, we sat down at a table in the midst of perhaps a score of others who were seated around us, smoked cigarettes, and read the German illustrated papers. My friend left me in order to have a wash, and the lavatory attendant with whom he entered into conversation said—

"You are not a German?"

My friend looked at him, and said indignantly—

"You would think I was if you saw the wound in my thigh which I received at the Front."

I visited this café on my

last successful escape from Germany, and was interested to notice that 'The Daily Telegraph'—about four days old—was amongst the newspapers stocked by the proprietors for the use of customers.

At ten o'clock no signs of G—— and S——. We waited until eleven, and still they did not come. When they had not put in an appearance at half-past eleven we came to the conclusion that it was time to make a move, and felt justified in assuming that they would not come. When we left the café we felt very disconsolate. The parcel for which S—— held the receipt contained a number of articles in the way of dripping, ship's biscuits, and warm underclothing, which were as near being absolutely essential as anything could be, and there was no prospect whatsoever of being able to replace them.

In the first place, our funds were not large enough, and we had hoped to be able to purchase for me, out of the money we had, a pair of strong walking-boots, as I had left the prison in a thin pair, which were very uncomfortable. There was no possibility of buying these if the money had to be spent on replacing the articles we had lost. From facts we learned later, there is very little doubt that S—— had not played the game. We wandered about the street in front of the café for some time, before we abandoned hope of meeting them, imagining that they would probably arrive later than they had promised. Finally, we abandoned all hope, and, very downhearted, went across to the station, in order to get our suit-case and precious articles for the journey from the left-luggage office. When we arrived there, we found to our consternation that Keith had lost the receipt.

While we were standing in front of the counter, and while Keith was searching through all his pockets for the receipt, a man, who I am absolutely certain was a detective, came and rubbed shoulders with us, and intently watched what was going on. Seeing that our prison was next door to the chief police-station in Berlin, we had had very many opportunities of getting to know the detective type, and there was no doubt whatever, in the mind of either of us, that this man was one. As a matter of fact, we learned, after our recapture, that detectives had been placed on the main stations in Berlin within an hour of our escape, with a view to preventing our departure from the city.

Keith, conscious that he was being watched, made a display of a document, furnished with a Prussian official stamp which he carried in his pocket-book, and I said to him in German in as matter-of-fact a manner as possible—

"You are unable to find the ticket—what?"

He answered in German—

"Yes; I am afraid I have lost it."

To our immense relief the detective turned away, strolled to the counter to watch other people, and then moved about, inquisitively observing the movements of persons passing to and fro in the crowded hall.

We got out into the street as quickly as possible, in order to discuss the serious state of affairs. It was close upon midnight. It seemed futile to go to a hotel, without luggage and without papers; and in view of so many disappointing occurrences at the very outset of our adventures, we felt that we were doomed to failure at the very beginning. While we were wondering where we could possibly spend the night, I remembered the name and address of an unpretentious hotel, where I had once stayed in times of peace. We drove there in a cab, having decided that we would say we had come from Elberfeld or Hannover, and that we had had the misfortune to lose our luggage, which contained our identification papers.

"Full up!" was the night porter's reply on our arrival there.

The cabby, however, at our request, drove us to another quiet hotel of the same class, and there the night porter informed us we could have a room, though he listened very suspiciously to our story of lost luggage and lost papers. He was inquisitive in the extreme, and when he had left our room, we looked at each other, and agreed that we should be very fortunate if we managed to leave the hotel without being arrested as suspected characters. Still, in for a penny in for a pound. There was nothing for it but to make the best of things.

After our prison beds, the clean white sheets and eiderdowns were a wonderful treat, and we both slept well. We knew that it was the practice of the Berlin police to inspect hotel registers at eight o'clock each morning, and make inquiries about the different guests. We therefore arranged to be called early, on the pretext that we had to leave by train from a certain station. We took the precaution of giving the name of a station in quite a different part of the town from the station from which we actually intended to leave. We left the hotel about half-past seven in the morning, and after having written fictitious names and addresses in the hotel register, had a short conversation with the landlady, who asked us point-blank whether we were foreigners or not. We denied the horrid imputation, and assured her that we were German business men who had come on business to Berlin, and were unfit for military service. A young officer took breakfast at a neighbouring table in the dining-room and bowed to us as he entered. We asked for minute directions in order to get to the station from which we did *not* intend to travel, and, telling the landlady that we should, in all likelihood, be back again that night, and

that we should be obliged if she would reserve the same room for us, we left.

We went for a short distance in the direction in which she would expect us to go, and then, after waiting a long time for a tram, got one, full, apparently, of women clerks going to business. This tram took us again to the Zoological Gardens Station.

Keith, before we left the hotel in the morning, had found the luggage receipt in one of his pockets. This fact, coupled with the fact that we had managed to get away from the hotel without meeting the police, brought us one little ray of hope.

We realised that it was absolutely essential to get food of some kind. Ration cards we did not possess, and rationed articles we were, therefore, unable to buy. As practically everything was rationed, the only things which we were able to purchase were two pounds of chocolate creams at nine shillings a pound, and two small tins of sardines, which cost us four and six each. We had hoped to be able to buy nuts, but we could obtain them nowhere. We got our luggage, and at about half-past ten in the morning found ourselves on the platform of the Zoological Gardens Station, with second-class tickets for Hannover in our pockets. Our experience on the previous evening with a detective on that very station did not tend to make us feel very much at ease, though we were carrying one or two German newspapers, and I had also bought Captain König's recently published book, 'The Voyage of the Deutschland,' the story of his sensational trips across the Atlantic in the first German submarine merchantman.

We had intentionally taken tickets for a *Bummelzug* (slow train), in the belief that such a train would be less likely to be visited by detectives than an express corridor train, and I think we were correct in our surmise. The journey was a painfully slow one, and there were times when we seemed to be subjected to very close scrutiny by some of the other occupants of our compartment. At Stendal we had a long wait, and spent about an hour over a fairly decent meal of fish and vegetables, which we obtained without having to produce ration cards. While we were walking along the platform to our compartment in the train, we found ourselves at the tail-end of a column of about one hundred Russian military prisoners who were being transported by German guards to a village in the neighbourhood. They travelled by the same train, and I remember to this day my feeling of mingled exultation and compassion,—exultation at the thought that we had, for a brief spell at any rate, flung off our bonds, and compassion for the poor fellows who walked in front of us, cut off for the uncertain duration of the war from the land of their birth. With what glee those very guards would have marched us back to

prison had they only had the faintest notion of our identity! It was one of those amusing situations which could be enjoyed at the time. Most similar experiences are funny only in retrospect.

Whenever people entered our compartment, I was always either pretending to sleep or pretending to be very deeply engrossed in my book, which I read twice through. Keith later on pointed out to me with pardonable glee that I had bought a faulty copy, several chapters of the book appearing in duplicate. I had read the book twice from beginning to end without noticing this. My thoughts were centred upon other things than Captain König's adventures. Our own adventures were my chief concern.

On arrival in Hannover about 7 o'clock the same evening, we deposited our luggage at the railway station and went into the town. It was already dark, and we spent about an hour in the main streets making a few additional purchases, visiting cafés, and searching for a suitable hotel for the night. In a shop where we tried in vain to purchase a pair of boots for me, in place of my thin ones, two young Germans who came in eyed us very suspiciously, and Keith thought he saw them follow us and enter the same café. We immediately paid for our beer and, once in the crowded main street, we set out to throw them off the scent, zigzagging through quiet and crowded streets until we felt reasonably certain that they had lost sight of us.

Knowing quite well that the odds were dead against us, we were both of the opinion that it would be very nice, after recapture, should we fail in our enterprise, to have as many pleasant memories as possible to dwell upon in solitary confinement. What could be pleasanter than the sharp contrast between prison skilly and the memory of at least one good square meal? So, to a restaurant. We found Hannover's best in the St Georg Palast Restaurant, where we had a most excellent fish meal. The large room was full of elegant women and smart officers, in their pale-blue uniforms, Hannover being a centre where the *élite* of the cavalry officers of the German army are quartered. We ate, drank, and smoked, supremely at our ease by this time, and when an excellent string orchestra on a raised platform at the end of the room began to play light music, I had to take a very firm grip of myself in order not to blubber like a child. Heigh-ho! we were having a run for our money.

Late that night we went to our fifth-rate hotel, where no one asked to see our papers (though we were required to sign the registration book), and we asked to be called at an early hour the following morning. I gave myself a name which I thought would not be too difficult to pronounce, and quite enjoyed inventing occupation, birthday, the name of the place from which I had

come, and so on. One mistake I made, and remembered when it was too late, was to misspell the name of the town I chose as my place of residence.

When we were called the next morning, Keith, roused from sleep by the noise of some one knocking at the door, called out in English "Thank you!" which I tried to drown just in time with a very sleepy but fairly loud "*Danke schön!*"

At breakfast, the waiter was very insolent because we could not produce traveller's bread-cards, and it was difficult to know what attitude to take up towards him. An attitude of haughtiness on the one hand, or of obsequiousness on the other, might have ended in fatal consequences. We got out of the difficulty by telling him resignedly that we would do without bread altogether. He little knew!

Although we had no intention of leaving from the main station, we sent the porter to the cloak-room with our suit-case, and called for it about an hour later. The intervening time we spent in a park, the name of which I have forgotten, in the suburbs of the city. Then we took a tram to a suburban station named Hainholz, to the west of Hannover on the main line, and there booked to Osnabrück, I believe, by slow train, our intention being to book again there to Haltern, a small railway junction about twenty to twenty-five miles from the Dutch frontier. It was about ten o'clock when we left, and apart from long waits at certain stations *en route*, we were in the train until about seven o'clock in the evening. Captain König again rendered me yeoman service, and I am very grateful to the gallant gentleman.

At Minden, where we had a long wait, we wished to spend our time in the station buffet, and in order to reach it, had to pass through the barrier between the ticket collector and two German military police, who were examining papers. The presence of these military policemen made us very nervous, but we noticed that, like the "red-caps" in our own country, they had to do only with men in uniform, and when our turn came we passed by them quite safely. In the buffet we were served with a fine veal ragout and vegetables at a very low price, and no coupons were asked for. I mention this fact because I have often contended that food conditions in Berlin are not typical of food conditions throughout Germany, and in my opinion never will be. It is misleading in the extreme for a casual observer to generalise from what he has seen in Berlin. My experience is that food conditions vary very greatly throughout the whole empire, according to the favourable or unfavourable situation of the town in question, and also according to the efficient or inefficient administration of the particular district. Prophecies to the effect that Germany will collapse through starvation in a few weeks' or a few months' time

should be received with great caution, and inquiry should be made as to whether the prophet is generalising from one specific case, or really in a position to speak with authority on conditions as they actually are throughout *the whole* of Germany.

We arrived at Haltern, the station past Dülmen—a great distribution camp for military prisoners—about seven that evening, Keith having rebooked at Osnabrück without difficulty. Fortunately, quite a crowd of people was leaving the station as we passed through the barrier, I remaining some little way behind my chum, and following him at a distance along the dark road which led to the village.

Haltern had been more or less Hobson's choice. Among other things which we lost in losing our parcel in Berlin, was our map, and as Keith had taken this route on a previous occasion and found much to recommend it, we thought it better to trust to his remembering the landmarks, even by night, rather than gamble on a new and entirely unknown route. Luck had been dead against us all along the line. Everything that could possibly go wrong, short of recapture, had gone wrong; and when, in the train, we saw snow falling and felt the bitter cold, we knew that only the luck that carries men back to safety, after fighting a forlorn hope, could possibly carry us through. Still, we were in for it. There was no turning back. We resolved to do our best, and leave the rest to fate.

The night, as I have said, was bitterly cold. The road and paths beneath our feet were covered with sheet-ice, and it was difficult at times to prevent oneself from falling. We got to the centre of the village, and then came to a main road running due west, where I noticed a large sign, indicating that this was the road to Wesel. I still remained some distance behind my chum, who was walking ahead rapidly with the suitcase. When we came to the outer edge of the village, I noticed that a woman wearing a shawl passed him, going on her way from the country into the village, stared intently at him, went on, stopped again, turned round again, and continued to watch him for some seconds. Then she hurried on into the village. She took no notice of me. As soon as she had disappeared in the darkness, I rushed up to Keith and told him what had taken place, and said that I feared the woman had gone to the village to report the fact of our presence in the neighbourhood to the police. Fearing the possibility of immediate pursuit, we dashed from the highroad behind a broken hedge on our right, and flung ourselves flat in the wet grass among stones, turning up our coat-collars so as to hide our white collars and shirts. We lay there for some time, listening and quietly breathing. We heard nothing, and presently Keith arose and made for

the open country in what, I suppose, was a north-westerly direction, right through the fields which covered the rising ground. I was about to follow him, just as he was becoming lost to view in the darkness, when I heard footsteps coming in our direction along the path at the side of the road. It was too late to warn Keith, and in any case he was already out of sight of any one passing by us. I flung myself flat on my stomach, with my head in the direction of the approaching footsteps, and listened. It was evidently a man coming into the village, for I heard his heavy walk as he passed me at a distance of about three yards. In the meantime Keith had missed me, and had come back, whispering my name. I answered, joined him, and we again set out for the open country.

It was, as I have said, pitch-dark, and we had not gone a hundred yards before it commenced to rain. By that time we had reached a dry ditch, on one side of which was a ploughed field, at the summit of the slope. Beyond the ploughed field in a direction due west we could see the dim outline of a dark wood silhouetted against the sombre sky, and behind us, on the other side of the ditch, ran the stone wall of a cemetery. Here we began to pack our rucksacks. I was ready a little earlier than Keith, owing to the fact that he wished to strap his overcoat to his rucksack, instead of wearing it as I preferred to do. While he had been filling the pockets of the rucksacks with the chocolate creams we had bought in Berlin, I heard one or two chocolates fall into the ditch, and one or two into the open suit-case. Thinking that it was a pity to waste them, I began to fumble in the suit-case with my gloved hand, until I found what I thought was one of them. As far as I knew, the suit-case had been emptied. It was much too dark to see anything. There was no moon, and no stars were visible. In size and shape, something which I picked up from the suit-case resembled in every respect the chocolates which we had bought, and, after tearing off with my teeth part of the tinfoil which covered it, I took a bite and swallowed a portion before I had time to spit it out. I did not discover until much later in the evening exactly what it was that I had swallowed, though I felt quite sure it was not chocolate cream. I said nothing about the incident at the moment to Keith, attaching no importance whatsoever to it.

As soon as we were ready we set out to look for a certain road, running west, which Keith had taken on a former occasion. We spent about two hours looking for that road, walking across open country, stumbling across ploughed fields, smashing through the ice which covered ditches, tearing clothes on barbed wire, and sliding across lanes

covered with sheet-ice, at the bottom of deep cuttings. I knew that Keith was in very good condition, and I felt, for the first two hours or so, ready to face any physical fatigue.

In a certain steep cutting, with high banks and hedges on each side, we heard footsteps, and a man passed us in the dark, who, however, seemed more afraid of us than we were of him. He hurried on past us, and was soon lost to view in the darkness.

We had an exceedingly trying two hours, trying both to our nerves and temper, until we found the right road. In order to satisfy ourselves that it was the one we sought, we had to return to the cross-roads at the western edge of the village, in order to establish certain facts. Then we set out for the west.

Before we had gone very far, and as nearly as I can remember between eleven and twelve at night, I became painfully conscious of the fact that my strength was ebbing fast. I could not understand it, in view of the fact that I had felt so fit in the early part of the evening. We had had a fairly strenuous time searching for the right road, but we had done nothing that could explain the condition in which I began to find myself. Although I said nothing to my friend, he noticed that in spite of my efforts I was not able to keep up speed, and he anxiously questioned me about it. Feeling that my condition was perhaps after all due to my long term of imprisonment—I had had much longer in the Stadt Vogtei Prison than my friend—I thought it possible that I might be able to work it off; but try as I would, I soon found that this was impossible, and all my assurances that I should be all right soon failed to reassure my friend. We discovered quite accidentally at this stage that what I had actually eaten, in the belief that it was chocolate, was as a matter of fact *part of the end of a stick of Colgate's shaving soap!* I have since learned that it was a well-known dodge among regular soldiers in the British army in times of peace, when a man wanted to avoid taking part in night manœuvres, to swallow a tiny soap-pill, the effect of this on the action of the heart being of such a character that the man was invariably pronounced by the regimental doctor "temporarily unfit for service." Although I spat out as much as possible of the soap when I discovered it was not chocolate, I had nevertheless swallowed a certain amount, and most decidedly much more than a tiny pill. My legs and feet became almost like lead, and it was only with the utmost exertion that I was able to drag one foot behind the other. We were filled with consternation.

Our route lay for a time along a good road, which rapidly deteriorated and became simply an irregular line of very deep cart-ruts in clay and mud, which in a night had been frozen into stone. Snow lay upon the ground,

and over and over again I crashed through the film of ice which covered the ruts, stumbled, and fell. My friend dragged me up and urged me on. On we went again. My condition grew worse and worse. Presently we came to a part of the country where the landscape was entirely different from the country through which we had passed. Sometimes for about half a mile our way led through forest aisles, with tall and ghostly rows of pine and fir trees on either side.

A mixture of sleet and snow beat in our faces and froze on our hats and overcoats. Over and over again I sank down amidst the snow on the wayside, was helped up again by my friend, struggled on twenty or thirty yards, and fell down again, to repeat the same procedure a hundred times. The country grew wilder, and opened out into expanses of heath partially covered with stunted shrubs.

We came to four cross-roads, and chose one of them, after frequent consultations of the compass, but soon found, after we had gone about half a mile, that it led on to a wild and snow-covered desolate heath, which Keith was certain he had not crossed on his former escape. Seeing that his former escape had been undertaken in the spring, when the appearance of the country was entirely different, his ability in route-finding, with snow on the ground, and on such a night as this, I regard as nothing short of marvellous.

By this time, about half-past two in the morning—we had been tramping almost continuously since seven — I had to confess that I was "done." I was completely exhausted. He helped me back to the edge of the forest and bedded me on some broken twigs in the gloom of the pine-trees, while he went back to the cross-roads in order to see, with our last match, whether he could discover where we had gone wrong. I lay there motionless, with mingled feelings of disgust, heart-breaking disappointment, and an intense longing for sleep. How long I lay there I do not know. Keith returned after a time, and, as he told me later, thought I had died while he was away. He examined my pulse, and told me later that it was hardly perceptible, and very very slow.

Feeling that he ought to have the best possible chance, I pleaded with him to leave me there and go on alone. He would not hear of this, and turned down all my arguments. He helped me on to my feet and practically dragged me back to the cross-roads, carrying my rucksack as well as his own. There I sank into the snow again. He pointed out to me the road we should have taken; but we both realised that it was out of the question for us to go on, and we decided, after a short consultation, to return to a rickety straw-shed

which we had noticed near a farm, at a distance of about three miles from Haltern. It consisted of a straw-rick, covered by an open leaky roof supported by four corner-posts.

We chose the road which we thought was the right one, and painfully made our way along its deeply-rutted surface for a considerable distance, only to discover that it led us into unfamiliar country. We were wrong again. There was nothing for it but to retrace our steps. By this time my eyes were beginning to play me tricks, and I dimly remember swearing most volubly—not usually one of my many faults—as the thought came over me of all that our failure at the last lap would mean. Still, as I have often thought since, whenever, while in jail, we had indulged in calculations of our chances, we had always been most firmly of the opinion that we should have no prospect of success in attempting to cross the frontier when the landscape was white with snow. Two dark moving bodies on a white surface would present an ideal target for the frontier guards. Our plans also necessarily involved our spending a full day—from dawn till dusk—lying out in the open, and, unsatisfactorily furnished as we were with food and clothing, and with nothing in the way of stimulants, it is an open question whether we should have survived such an ordeal in our then state of health, or whether we should have been compelled, nearer the goal, to crawl to some habitation and give ourselves up to the people there. The gall, however, that tasted so bitterly at the time, was the thought that my breakdown had deprived the two of us of a sporting chance. I felt keenly for my friend, and my readers will place their own value upon the splendid way in which he stood by his chum.

To return: we found that we had gone wrong, and there was no alternative but to retrace our steps to the cross-roads. I am not quite sure, but I believe we took another wrong turning before we eventually struck the right road, and then, proceeding wearily along it, we came to the first cottage. We tried half-heartedly to knock up the people there, but receiving no response, I stumbled along, helped by Keith, to the straw-rick, which was our real objective. By means of a rickety ladder, two of whose rungs broke when we tried to use them, we climbed up into the straw, and all that I remember is lying there, convulsed every three or four seconds throughout the long night with shivers which shook every nerve in my body, constantly wet by the dripping snow from the roof, and too exhausted even to be able to cover myself with the straw which lay around me.

We got through the night somehow or other, and at about six or seven in the morning, heard below us the noise of some one walking in the farm-

yard. Keith climbed down the ladder and went to the farmhouse, to inform the people that we were two young Germans who had lost our way the previous night on the snow-covered heath, and had been forced to take refuge in their straw-rick. He came back shortly afterwards with the welcome news that the farmer's wife had requested him to take me into the kitchen, where we might sit by the fire and drink a cup of coffee which she would prepare for us. Painfully, and still trembling in every limb, I managed to climb down the ladder and hobble into the house. The goodwife and her young son and daughters received us quite kindly, and although we remained there more than an hour, and drank and ate the things they provided for us, they never seemed to doubt our story that we were Germans, who were not in the army because we were physically unfit for military service. The old lady told us of her soldier son, and when we left in order to return to Haltern Station, we paid her for the food, and for any damage for which we might have been responsible. I left Captain König's 'Voyage of the Deutschland' with the eldest daughter. I have often wondered since whether I shall ever have an opportunity of meeting these kind people again, and telling them the true story which lay behind that little incident.

I was feeling better, thanks perhaps to the coffee and food, but I recognised that it would be folly to attempt to lie up the whole day, in the condition in which I still found myself; and as we walked along the highroad, through beautiful snow-covered country, we discussed plans, and decided that we would return to Haltern Station and take tickets for a certain town in another part of Germany, where I thought we might be able to find a hiding-place, with a view to our lying up there until the snow had disappeared and I had completely recovered. Had fortune favoured us in carrying out this plan, we should, at a later date, have emerged from our hiding-place, and made another dash for the frontier. In spite of our heart-breaking disappointments, and our very slim chances of ultimate success, I was glad to be free, and remember how, with a feeling of intense gratitude, I walked along that country road, with pine-woods on either side crowning the snow-covered slopes; how my heart leapt at the sight of an occasional robin-redbreast, and how gladdened I felt at the sound of children's laughter. We got through the village safely, and arrived at the station. There we took tickets for a certain town, and as we were passing through the barrier, my friend asked the ticket-collector from which platform the train left. The man looked at us and said quite quietly—

"From over there, gentlemen! But you have time enough. You have more than ten minutes to spare. Why

not go into the waiting-room? You will be notified of the departure of the train."

"Thank you," we said, and turned to walk to the waiting-room, which, as soon as we entered, we discovered was not only the station buffet, but also the Army Headquarters for the village. A tall Lieutenant, in the smart green uniform of a Prussian Jäger Regiment, stood near the buffet, and, as we ordered coffee, we noticed to our dismay that the ticket-collector had followed us into the room and was engaged in conversation with the Lieutenant. They glanced several times in our direction, and before the waiter had time to bring our coffee, the Lieutenant came up to us, and, putting his hands on the table, and leaning over, said—

"*Wo kommen Sie her? Wo sind Ihre Papiere?* (Where do you come from? Where are your papers?)"

We looked at each other, made a sorry attempt to smile, saw in each other's eyes recognition of the fact that the game was up, and that bluff would serve us no longer. We admitted our identity.

"Corporal, take these two men across to the Guard-room!"

. . . . . .

Failed again!

(*To be continued.*)

MUSINGS WITHOUT METHOD.

THE MRS GUMMIDGE OF THE EMPIRE—THE IRISH REBELLION—WHAT THE GOVERNMENT KNOWS—IRELAND'S TRUE GRIEVANCE—A BORN PARLIAMENTARIAN—MR HERBERT FISHER'S BILL—THE FUTURE OF THE "YOUNG PERSON"—THE SOUL OF THE NATION DESTROYED—MILITARY DRILL—THE REAL AIM OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION—AN EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY PEPYS.

THE Irish, we are told, are always busily engaged in nursing a grievance. What that grievance is they have doubtless forgotten. It is some two centuries old, and was long ago atoned for. But there are some to whom the vague consciousness of a grievance is a necessity of life, and the Irish will doubtless enfeeble their mind and purpose by assuming an injury until the end of time. It matters not to them that the pretence of bearing an imaginary wrong with impatience is the plain mark of inferiority. If for a moment they were willing to renounce their love of complaint, they would be instantly recalled to their duty by a set of raucous agitators.

And though Ireland plays her chosen part as the Mrs Gummidge of the Empire—"I am a lone, lorn creetur, and everythink goes contrairy with me"—the British Government, in which Ireland has more than her fair share, with the generous gesture of Mr Peggotty, overwhelms her with benefits. Do her citizens want land? Millions are forthcoming from the British taxpayer, and Ireland, which always keeps an eye upon the main chance, accepts what is given her with a curse. "When we were not appealing to the British Government," says Mr George Russell (A.E.), "we were not idle with our prayers in other quarters. . . . We appealed to God, humanity, the United States, the Colonies, for pity, for sympathy, for dollars. We warned America that if she did not come to our rescue our national aspirations would die out, and the responsibility would be on her shoulders. One felt ashamed of the name of Irishman in the midst of all these tearful supplications. I received a letter once from an American friend who expressed a view which grows more and more popular in his country. 'Can't the Irish people do something except beg? Can they do nothing for themselves? Their policy isn't manly, and when I think of Joan of Arc I feel it isn't even womanly.'" They can do one other thing than beg: they can rebel when England is at war, and thus hamper

the partner whose benefits they receive. Indeed, ever since the war began, we have fought Ireland's battle as well as our own, and we have flattered her absurdly for each scrap of grudging help that she has given us. We have protected her with a careful hand against the necessary hardships of war. While we in England and Scotland limit our desires cheerfully, Ireland knows no restraint. She fleets the time pleasantly as in a golden age. If she has a fancy for whippet-coursing it is instantly gratified. Horse-races and cock-fights are provided her to mitigate the dulness of life. She knows not the tedium of rations nor the lack of petrol. Her rebels have been permitted to make their triumphal progresses in costly motor-cars. And hitherto travelling by railroad has not been discouraged by the imposition of higher fares.

What has Ireland given us in exchange for these many privileges?—rebellion, malice, and murder. England has a short memory, and is too careless to nurse a grievance; but Easter Day is not yet quite forgotten—that day on which the Irish chose to show their "power" and "patriotism" by killing English soldiers in cold blood and by taking pot-shots at harmless citizens. And even that diversion was permitted them. The handful which the Government arrested was presently enlarged and tricked out in new suits. And this brings us to the one solid grievance of Ireland: she needs to be governed firmly and justly, and our politicians are as much afraid of justice as of firmness. They forget that a country cannot be made happy by a policy of all rewards and no punishments. Messrs George and Duke did but carry on the baleful policy of Messrs Asquith and Birrell. They made themselves, by their neglect, the partners of rebellion; and even when they made a show of force, they did not mean it.

After the German offensive in March, Mr Lloyd George introduced, all too late, a man-power bill, and he spoke proudly of the measure of conscription which he would impose, justly and properly, upon Ireland. We, like many others, were duped by the tone of his speech into believing him sincere. From that day to this nothing more has been heard, on the Government's part at least, of Irish conscription. We have merely been the witnesses of what inevitably happens. We have seen resumed, in one episode, the whole history of Ireland. On the side of the Government there have been bluster and timidity. It promised a miracle of fortitude, and it collapsed in fear. On the side of Ireland there have been anger, malice, and renewed rebellion. The bishops of the Roman Catholic Church threw themselves wildly into the fray, assured us that not one single Irishman should be taken to fight against Germany, and

proved once more how dangerous a thing it is to tolerate an *imperium in imperio*. Meanwhile, conscription was quietly and privately dropped. A little later the familiar policy of brimstone and treacle was publicly administered. It was announced that the Government had evidence of German plots in Ireland, and a large number of rebels, who never should have been permitted to be at liberty, were arrested. Such was the brimstone. The treacle was added in the shape of a hint that volunteers would be welcomed. By these means an appearance of strength was given to what was in reality an abject surrender. That there had been German plots in Ireland since the outbreak of the war was generally known; the Easter Day rebellion and the trial of the monstrous Casement had abundantly confirmed the gravest suspicions; and the statement issued by the Government has not done much more than fill the details in a well-known outline, and to kill conscription.

With a proper reticence the Government makes no more than a summary of the events since the Irish Rebellion of 1916. "A full statement," we are told, "of the facts and documents in possession of the Government would disclose the names of those who stood by the Government, and also the channels of communication through which the German Government was acting, which it would not be in the public interest to reveal at present." That is very right and proper. And the story that is told of what happened before the black Easter Day is interesting enough of itself to be put upon record. It is told in the proper style of conspirators, and all the actors in the plot are those whose names we expect to find upon the traitorous roll. The mischief began as early as November 1914, when Casement, now idolised by the foolish as a martyred poet, sent a message through Herr Zimmerman to Count Bernstorff, asking that a messenger, a native-born American if possible, should be sent to Ireland with the word that all was favourable. He was to carry with him no compromising letter, and no doubt he delivered his message with satisfactory results to the rebels, whom British Ministers have covered with an amiable flattery. And this was not the end of Casement's demands. He asked also for an Irish priest, who should work in the prison camps of Germany, and corrupt the Irish prisoners of war. This joyous instrument of evil was also furnished in the person of Father John T. Nicholson, who arrived safely in Germany to do his dirty work, and who lost no time in sending messages of encouragement to America.

Thus the train was laid, and by 1916 all was ready for the explosion. The messenger who had been sent to Ireland without a letter had had an excellent effect there, as we should

expect. In a despatch of February 1916 Count Bernstorff made a grateful acknowledgment, and included also an extract from a report of John Devoy, the head of the Clan-na-Gael, saying that the rebellion could not long be postponed since the leaders feared arrest. Mr Devoy, it appears, was ignorant of the general pusillanimity of the British Government. However, he declared that it was decided to begin the fight on Easter Sunday, and he begged that arms and ammunitions should be delivered in Limerick. Herr von Jagow promised that the arms should be landed at the proper time in Tralee Bay. He likewise promised, as the complaisant gentleman he is, that an air raid and a naval attack should be delivered in England between April 24 and 26, and this part of the bargain was duly kept. The other part of the bargain—the landing of arms—failed miserably, despite the liberal use of codes and of the private wireless stations which Ireland is permitted to install without let or hindrance. However, the rebellion came, as we all know, on Easter Monday, a day after the scheduled time. The Irish volunteers were in close communication with the German Government, and upon which of the two well-matched parties lies the burden of failure we need not inquire. At any rate, the Irish rebels had done their best to show their gratitude for the Wyndham Act.

The failure of the Easter Revolution did not damp their ardour. The plottings with Germany never ceased. The Revolution Director still insisted that the rising must be contingent on the sending by Germany of "an expedition with a sufficient military force to cover the landing." It was also proposed that submarine and Zeppelin bases should be established on the West of Ireland. Herr Zimmermann was obliged to refuse the aid of German troops, but he promised that a supply of arms should be landed between February 21st and 25th, 1917. Meanwhile, a stalwart Nationalist, who bears the good old Erse name of de Valera, was carrying the fiery cross up and down Ireland. "By properly organising recruiting," said he, "they could have 500,000 fighting volunteers in Ireland." But he saw no chance of success in the near future, except through a German invasion and the landing of munitions in Ireland. "They should be prepared to leave nothing undone towards that end." And six months ago the same traitor announced that "so long as Germany is the enemy of England, and England the enemy of Ireland, so long will Ireland be the friend of Germany." The Government, which knew perfectly well what the man was doing and saying, left him at liberty—a piece of reckless levity which needs no comment.

Indeed the Government cannot shelter itself at any time

behind ignorance. Its information was accurate, and it seems to have followed the movements of the traitors with a detached curiosity. "The British authorities," we are told, "were able to warn the Irish Command regarding the probable landing of an agent from Germany from a submarine. The agent actually landed on April 12, and was arrested." That the agent landed is not remarkable. We cannot but be surprised that the British Government had the temerity to arrest him. However, what is plain is that the Sinn Feiners have for four years fought for Germany with all means in their power. They have aided in the establishment of submarine bases in Ireland, and have done their best to connive at the destruction of American transports. In the past they have condescended to accept whatever money America has been kind enough to send them, and no doubt they are proud of the currency in which they pay the debt.

At last, then, the chief stirrers-up of rebellion are under lock and key; and it is characteristic of the British Government that it should assume a half-apologetic tone in announcing its desperate action. "In these circumstances," to quote the official statement, "no other course was open to the Government, if useless bloodshed was to be avoided and its duty to the Allies to be fulfilled, but to intern the authors and abettors of this criminal intrigue." What an excellent phrase it is—"if useless bloodshed was to be avoided"! Is it possible to imagine a Government which did not count the avoidance of useless bloodshed among its duties? But where Ireland is concerned, the duty of Governments is obviously suspended. For four years the rebels in Ireland have conspired with Germany in the full light of day, and, except for a brief interval in prison, they have conspired without restraint or interference. Even now we are not told that the scoundrels, at last interned, will ever be brought to trial for their misdeeds. As they are Irish, they will probably be dismissed to their homes in nice new suits of clothes, entertained as heroes upon the Terrace of the House of Commons, or welcomed to Westminster as honoured members of our Legislature. And Ireland is said to have a grievance!

The interned ones themselves have long ago been fitted with appropriate haloes. It is certain that every morning they gaze at their "intellectual" faces in the glass, and see the reflection of unselfish martyrdom. It is not for them to condemn treachery and dishonour. Nothing is sacred to them but their own silly egoism. And their silly egoism persuades them to demand that loyal Ulster should be placed beneath their heels. If justice be done after the war, the plain truth will be told that the rebels and their

supporters are unfit to exercise a parliamentary vote of any kind, whether their elect sit in Dublin or in Westminster. Let them go to Berlin if they like, and be bullied by their friends. If we are wise, we shall not tolerate their interference in the government of Great Britain for many years to come.

It is noteworthy, also, that no protest has come from Nationalist Ireland against the treachery of the Sinn Feiners. Whether the leaders of the Nationalist party were cognisant of Mr de Valera's action or not we do not know. They have not raised their voices in disapproval; with the extreme views of Sinn Fein they have openly sympathised. And if the Nationalist party is silent, the British Government is still irresolute and conciliatory. Having abandoned conscription, having appealed unsuccessfully for volunteers, it now comes forward with an offer and a bribe. Henceforth the rural population may regard itself as not "available for military purposes"; but if 50,000 heroic souls, gathered from "the large number of young men in the towns, far greater than is required to carry on the ordinary retail trade," will kindly come forward, they are assured that they need not go back to their counters after the war: each one of them shall receive a grant of land. Such is the last act in the tragic farce of Ireland. Why the number, 50,000, was chosen is not explained. It bears no relation either to Ireland's capacity of finding soldiers or to the needs of our army. Valera boasted that he could raise 500,000 men, and it is indeed a poor compliment to Ireland to take it for granted firstly that only one-tenth of her manhood is ready to fight against the Germans, and that even this modest number will not come forward unless a sufficient reward is offered. Thus is the carrot dangled before the nose of the donkey, and yet he won't run!

Yet, as we have said, Ireland has a grievance, and this grievance is that for twelve years she has not known the benefit of any kind of government. She has been free to conspire and to rebel as she pleases, and she has exercised this freedom to the full. Our politicians have looked upon the plots, which are not concealed from them, with a complaisant tolerance, and they must share the responsibility with Sinn Fein. A little firmness four years ago, when the treachery began, might have saved much "useless bloodshed," which hypothetically the Government is willing to avoid. But there was and there is no sign of firmness. Since March the Government has decreed conscription, has appealed for volunteers, has bribed 50,000 men with offers of land, and perhaps next week it will gratefully place a coronet upon the head of each recruit. Only one advantage has come from the Government's pusillanimity: it is now

clear to all the world that Ireland is not a poor down-trodden creature, deprived by a base Saxon Government of joy and freedom. Rather is it overloaded with comforts and privileges, exempt from all the restraints and hardships of war, and promised the highest rewards for small acts of condescension.

So long as the war lasts, Ireland, from its own point of view, will have nothing to complain of. No gratification is denied it, except the gratification of commerce with the enemy. But after the war? How will Ireland stand then? In neglect of its duty it will stand almost alone. It will have no single rival in rebellion and in trafficking with the Germans. Of course, its own egoism will protect it from any self-reproach. In its own blinded eyes it will still appear the injured innocent of the world. The question it will be forced to ask and answer is: How will Ireland appear in the eyes of others? It will be friendless and alone. Its amiable allies, the Germans, will be powerless, even if they are willing, to help. Not only has it forfeited the sympathy of America by its misdeeds; it is now avenging itself upon its former friend with flouts and gibes. "After all," says the 'Freeman's Journal,' "when all is said and done, Ireland was in the war while America was hesitating." The boast and the taunt are alike unmerited. The 'Freeman's Journal' does not point out that Ireland did not go very far into the war, but did go very far into a traitorous commerce with Germany. Such, then, will be Ireland's bitter memory—to have conspired with the common enemy and to have failed.

Mr Herbert Fisher was recently described as a "born Parliamentarian." The compliment, wholly deserved, can have given him but little pleasure. Parliamentarians are not very popular just now, and it is doubtful whether they merited much praise at any time. To be a Parliamentarian is to know how to press a measure through the House whatever be the measure's design and purpose, to be able to drive a sufficient number of members into the useful lobby, to possess the sophist's trick of making any cause you like to appear the just cause. All these things Mr Fisher has succeeded in doing, and we suppose that his Education Bill will pass into an Act of Parliament with as little delay as possible. And Mr Fisher has proved himself a true Parliamentarian in adaptability as well as in persuasiveness. We are told that if a man, unaccustomed to business, goes into the city in middle life, he outdoes in astuteness and cunning those who have grown up in the tradition of commerce. So Mr Fisher, who has spent many years in the wise seclusion of Oxford, swiftly goes beyond his colleagues in all the arts of the

politician. His Education Bill is the bill of a politician, not of a statesman. It was certainly born in a department, and has already lived an inglorious life of some years in the dust of an office. Then some permanent official, knowing that Mr Fisher was in want of a bill, washed the face of the poor foundling, furbished him up as well as possible, and gave the Minister a chance of conferring, as we are told, a greater benefit upon the world than it has known since 1870.

But is it of such a great benefit after all? It is true that it achieves many ends which seem desirable to-day. It will enormously increase the power of a public department; it will call into being thousands of inspectors and overseers; and it will invent a new set of crimes, which hitherto have escaped the eye of justice. Henceforth any poor boy or girl who, after the age of fourteen, refuses to receive the palatial benefits of what the State calls education, will be fined the sum of £1 for a second offence. Who is expected to pay the money we do not know. The parents will be charged only if they are guilty of connivance. But if the alternative to a fine is a term of imprisonment, then we may expect to see our jails constantly full, and may wonder piously at the might and ingenuity of the British Government.

What is offered as compensation for the new crime and the new punishment we do not yet know. We are told the number of hours assigned to the compulsory process of education. What is to be done in those hours is still a profound secret. Who shall choose the subjects to be dealt with? Shall the enforced student be permitted to select for himself what he desires to study, or shall he be obliged to follow the taste and fancy of others? Probably, as a sort of sanctity hangs about a ballot-box—as the only virtue known to democracy is the virtue of numbers—the poor victims will be invited to vote; and since minorities have no rights, forty-nine will be obliged to learn what is distasteful to them, if fifty-one insist upon it. But however the problem be solved, we cannot believe that every boy and every girl will ever be free to choose his own method of study and his own teacher. That would be too costly an operation to be lightly undertaken even by those who are desirous of purchasing votes. And how shall the new Act be applied in the remoter villages? In towns some sort of a makeshift may be devised which shall persuade the masses that education is being handed out to them as a useful commodity. But in a village which contains (let us say) twenty "young persons" ripe for the continuation school, the method of training will not be easy. To satisfy their needs some twenty teachers might be necessary, and these even the zeal of the local authority would be powerless to provide.

Probably the Act will end

in a series of what used to be called "penny readings," with magic-lantern slides—an ingenious method of pretending to teach without much trouble, and of safeguarding the "young persons" against any risk of mental discipline. But what is also of great importance is that we should know the purpose of Mr Fisher's new scheme. Does the Government desire to increase the commercial value of our "young persons," to make them what is called in the jargon of politics a "useful asset," or does it cherish a love of education for its own sake? If national assets are our aim, the only kind of education which will be worth the money will be strictly technical. The "young persons" of England will be brought up upon a uniform plan, like so many little Huns, and if they do not serve the State efficiently they will be regarded as waste products. And whether they succeed or fail, the process of their education will have done much to abolish that diversity of talent and temper which has always been the boast of England. We shall have our men and women cast to pattern, warranted to earn high wages and to vote as they are told. But we shall not look to them for surprise or invention. The soul of a part of the nation will be destroyed to satisfy the politicians.

If we are aiming at education for its own sake—the only aim worth attaining—Mr Fisher's bill is likely to fail also. Education, in this, the only true sense, is not good for everybody, and it can be forced upon all and sundry only with a vast waste of time and money. There are many thousands, in all classes, who rebel sturdily against education of any kind. They are not worse or better than others. Sincere in their dislike of books and all that books mean, they would be far more wisely employed working in the fields or in workshops—in using their hands, not their heads. No good can come of sending them to school until they are sixteen or eighteen, at the public expense, and no Act can hope to succeed which does not admit this obvious diversity of types. Indeed, the only sound education is that which a man gives himself, and that must come always not by compulsion but by free will. Nor is there anybody less competent to give it, or to suggest how it shall be given, than a Government Department, and we can only pity the sad "young persons" mentioned in the bill, some of whom will have education forced upon them, though they hate it, while others, genuinely desirous to educate themselves, will find that they are fobbed off compulsorily with a sample of learning concocted in an office, and duly inspected by obedient officials.

There should be, moreover, a limit set to what is provided freely by the state. If all our "young persons" are to be educated for their own pleasure, then it should be

understood that they do some sort of national service in return. In the public schools there is not the smallest show of reluctance to serve the country. The O.T.C. is of universal acceptance. But what is good enough for the boys of Eton and Harrow is held to be disastrous for the boys who attend elementary schools. The mere hint that it is sweet and comely to fight for their country must be kept from these tender spirits. With incredible carelessness Mr Fisher had given the local education authority "power to include in their schemes military training or drill for young persons between the ages of 14 and 18, who would be compulsorily required to attend continuation schools." We have been four years at war. We should by this time have learned that it is not wholly useless for boys to acquire some knowledge of military drill. We should not have been so long in beating the Germans if military drill had been permitted in our schools. After all, there is nothing disgraceful in learning the rudiments of defence and attack. As a member of the House was bold enough to assert, "the training of Boy Scouts is distinctly a form of military training." But the Boy Scouts are nothing to the Government, and Mr Fisher refused to be led away by an evil example. So he gave "a satisfactory assurance that there was no desire on the part of the Government to introduce compulsory military training into continuation schools." We are easily persuaded to believe this, and we hope, for the sake of the scrupulous Government, that it will never be whispered in the ear of the "young persons" that England has been at war.

There also Mr Fisher proved himself a born parliamentarian. A man who believes "it would be unfortunate if it should be thought that the Government were attempting to introduce anything like compulsory military training into our schools" might have been born and bred in the House of Commons. We hope that he will carry his scruple a step further, and insist that his teachers should speak always of Swedish exercises, not of Swedish drill. The word "drill" savours of militarism, and if the boys and girls, who are born into the world for the sole purpose of voting at the proper time and on the right side, accustomed their ears to the sound of so dangerous a word as "drill," it is dimly possible that the next war might find us not wholly unprepared. The democracy might even become interested in national defence, and then not even Viscount Haldane would be able to withstand its clamour. However, all's well that ends well, and our young democrats of both sexes will be as closely guarded against the contamination of military drill and "Chauvinism," its natural result, as though they were conscientious objectors.

Henceforth, then, from the age of five to fourteen wholly, and partially from the age of fourteen to eighteen, the children of the working classes will belong to the State. They will be fed and taught as the State wills, and if only they were put into uniform they might as well be living in reformatories. That the working classes should approve of this servile policy is astonishing enough, and yet they appear to support Mr Fisher's Bill with a whole heart. Now the basis of every strong State is the family, and it is the family and the responsibility which it brings with it that the Government has set itself to destroy. Nor is the paradox mitigated by the reflection that at the very moment when they declare themselves ready to give up their children of five years of age to the public custody, the working classes demand to take into their own hands the sole and undivided government of the Empire. How shall a man rule a great State who declines to manage his own household? How shall we dare to talk of freedom when we have put into the chains of a compulsory and undefined system of education all the "young persons" in the land?

And education, thus freely given, must be paid for, and here we are faced by a second injustice. The bulk of the money, which will be spent upon the training of the children of the working classes, must be wrung from the middle class, upon which taxation falls most heavily. The result will be that the middle class will find the education of its own children, which it has always undertaken itself, increasingly difficult. And this difficulty is the more to be deplored, because from the middle class, independent and self-supporting as it is, comes much of the best talent and the best intelligence of the country. This hardship cannot be exaggerated. The middle class, often worse paid than the working class, which rules us to-day by force of numbers, will be asked to pay for the education of children whose parents are perfectly well able to pay for it themselves. Thus the burden will be put upon the wrong shoulders; the continuation schools will be supported by those who do not frequent them; and the best profit that the country can hope to extract from them will be the fines levied upon the young defaulters, five shillings for the first, and a pound for any subsequent offence.

Nor is the Education Department likely to stay its hand at the continuation schools. Its aim is nothing less than to take hold of all the schools and universities in the land. All the parents in England are to be dragooned as the working classes wish to be dragooned to-day. The House of Commons has passed a clause which will prevent a parent from sending his sons to any school which the Board of Education does not deem efficient. Eton or Harrow or

Charterhouse may easily fall under the ban, and few will believe the Board of Education are fair judges of efficiency. The strength of England in the past has been that she has had schools and universities of many types. Thus we have found men who could perform the widely differing duties imposed by the governance of a large empire. If the ambition of the Board of Education be not checked we shall all be shaped and inspected to a single pattern. We shall all learn the same thing at the same hour, and be fit only to obey the unreasonable behests of a nicely engineered majority. We shall think alike and act alike, and instead of going and coming freely as we please, we shall be packed into whitewashed buildings provided by the Government, and there we shall sit, like Peter Bell's party, "all silent and all damned."

The 'Memoirs of William Hickey,' of which a second volume has just been published (London: Hurst & Blackett), deserve more careful editing than they have received. We have a right to be told something more about their ingenious author than the editor has told us. We have a right to ask precise questions about the manuscript, whose pedigree apparently goes back only to 1865, and to see a specimen reproduced in facsimile. As it is, an air of mystery pervades the book, and a little explanation might have dispelled it. However, we must e'en take it as it comes, and admit that William Hickey was an engaging ruffian, who has earned our gratitude by painting a portrait of himself in which nothing is sacrificed to diffidence or modesty.

He wrote his memoirs long after the events which they chronicle, and they lack the precision of a journal kept from day to day. Otherwise we might describe Hickey as a Pepys of the eighteenth century. He has something of Pepys's candour and Pepys's lack of self-consciousness. He gives himself away with the same light-heartedness wherewith he gives away his friends. His standard of honour is not high, and he makes no pretence that he is any better than he is. He steals money from his respectable father, a friend of Burke, and the "blunt, pleasant creature" of Goldsmith's 'Retaliation,' as gladly as he robs his friend of his mistress. Throughout his life he kept the worst of good company, and was most intimately at home in the taverns and gambling-hells of London. Drury Lane was his favourite quarter, though in later years he did not disdain the masquerades which Mme. Cornelys arranged in Soho Square. And though, when he chose his own companions, they were rather cheerful than wise, fortune threw him continually among the great. His book contains sketches — the more valuable

perhaps because they appear to be drawn without intention —of Burke and Francis and Warren Hastings, and many another distinguished or notorious statesman. And Hickey is no hero-worshipper. He bends the knee to nobody. Whoever it be that crosses his path, he meets him upon equal terms, and keeps himself ingenuously in the centre of the picture, as though he was rather conferring than accepting a favour. He has all the lighter vices. He is raffish, rowdy, extravagant, unscrupulous in money and in love, and yet he defies the censor in his book as he defied most censors, except that "special attorney," his father, during his life.

It is characteristic of him that, as he sat down in middle age to compose his 'Memoirs,' he remembered with the greatest pride and vividness his triumphs with the bottle. Never once was he unresponsive to the challenge. He would drink with any one who was ready to sit late and to drink deep. In his hot youth champagne and burgundy seem to have caught his palate. Grown to manhood, he preferred claret, and if we numbered the bottles which he says that he drank in his second volume, the result would be astonishing. If he falls in the encounter, he confesses defeat like a man. He speaks almost as tenderly of the headaches, the proper consequence of his debauches, as of the debauches themselves. Nor is he careful always to select the companions of his revels. If we may believe Hickey, Henry Mordaunt, my Lord Peterborough's brother, was an unredeemed scoundrel, mad, brutal, and unscrupulous; yet Hickey, who hated him, could no more easily avoid his society than Mordaunt could avoid the society of Hickey, whom he cordially detested, and who at last carried off from him the beautiful Charlotte Barry. Truly, the bottle which makes odd companions never brought together an odder couple than William Hickey and Henry Mordaunt.

In the second volume of his 'Memoirs' Hickey carries his reader abroad with him to the West and East Indies. And if he changes his sky he does not change his mind. The hottest climate neither checks his zest of life nor moderates his appetites. The pursuit of law, which seems in India to have been profitable enough, was but an interlude in his life of busy amusement. And yet he finds time to paint, after his summary fashion, the great men whom he encountered. He speaks familiarly of Hastings and Impey. He agrees with the rest of the world that Francis was a pompous fellow, the more readily because he replied to Burke's letter of introduction that the idea "of his ever having it in his power to be useful to an attorney" was ridiculous; and he notes with pleasure the litigation in which Francis was involved with George Francis Grand, the husband of a famous lady, to

whom Francis was attached, and whom Talleyrand presently married by order of Napoleon. Yet he never takes us very far or very deep into affairs of State, which are, in his eyes, mere interruptions to the proper business of life. No sooner had he made a comfortable sum of money than he hastened home to spend it in London, and he takes leave of us at Lisbon, on his way back to India, where he hoped that pleasure and the rupee would still await him. So we look forward to a third volume of these entertaining 'Memoirs' with curiosity, and our debt to the editor will be increased if, as we have suggested, he describe more clearly the history of the manuscript and throw a little more light upon the life and character of its author.

Printed by William Blackwood and Sons.

BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE.

No. MCCXXXIV. AUGUST 1918. Vol. CCIV.

A MOBILE X-RAY SECTION ON THE ITALIAN FRONT.

BY HELENA GLEICHEN.

I.

Our X-Ray plant consisted of a switch-board, an interruptor, and a coil, the motive power being derived from the engine of the motor-car, which worked the dynamo. This dynamo was carried under the front seat, and worked with a separate gear (150 volts, 17 ampères). The table we found most useful was Sir James Mackenzie Davidson's ordinary ambulance stretcher, laid on a couple of trestles, which folded up, and took very little room in the car. We preferred it to other tables, because it only meant one move for the patient instead of one from his bed to a stretcher, another from the stretcher to the table, and then the whole performance having to be repeated before he got back to bed. The apparatus took ten minutes to unload and fix up ready for work.

Our first month was full of woe. We knew we could take good radiographs, but every one we took was a failure—in our eyes at least. People were kindness itself, and politely assured us that they were very good, adding, in their own minds, "for women and amateurs!" But we knew well how bad they were, and could not make out why. At last we discovered. We borrowed some plates from a base hospital, and, lo and behold! the beautiful radiographs we were accustomed to see produced by our apparatus reappeared. Our plates that we had bought in Paris must have been stored in a damp place, and had been utterly ruined! Cappelli, the big plate-manufacturer at Milan, was most kind when we told him our trouble, and volunteered to

take all the spoilt plates and replace them with good ones for nothing — a truly noble present to the wounded.

Such an innovation as this type of work, run entirely by two women, was bound to meet at first with a good deal of curiosity, not unmixed with suspicion, as to whether we were capable of carrying out what we had offered to do; but when the surgeons saw that we understood our job, and only thought how best we could help them in theirs, they adopted us wholesale, and used us on every occasion. This was what we had come out for, and we were exceedingly proud of the fact.

The first evening that we spent in our new rooms will long remain in my memory. The windows looked towards the Austrian lines, about seven kilometres off, and the persistent flashing reflecting in one's room, and the incessant booming of the big guns, quite did away with all possibilities of sleep. I suppose I must have been snoozing, when I suddenly became aware that the big guns had changed to the quick rattle of rifles and machine-guns, to my unaccustomed ears suspiciously close. I lay and listened for some time, but did not like to get up, as, being new to the game, I thought it probably was always like that. At last I could bear it no longer, and getting up went into Mrs Hollings' room. I found her firmly in bed, saying, "We shall have to get accustomed to this: it is perfectly natural, and will happen every night." We agreed that it was a little excessive, but as it undoubtedly was a most natural thing in the Zone of War, we had better go to sleep and get accustomed to it as soon as possible. So I departed, and slept the sleep of the just till next morning, when our orderly came in with the news that there had been a big attack by the Austrians in the night, and that they had got through in one place, and had reached a little village not three kilometres from our house. They had been driven back to their original lines only at five that morning. So my getting out of bed had not been so very uncalled for after all. I packed my bag with necessaries, and kept it under my bed for quite a long time after that, including sufficient for my partner, as she was proud, and refused to take any precautions for herself.

As soon as we found that all our plates had been spoilt, we decided that one of us must go to Milan to see what Cappelli could provide: we were determined that we would be ready for a rush of work when it came, as it inevitably would come, and that fairly soon. So I settled to go in our Berliet touring-car.[1]

[1] Presented to us by Sir James Mackenzie Davidson, who had kindly given us six weeks' coaching in the localisation of foreign bodies.

My idea was to go through as quickly as possible, and bring back with me in the car fresh plates, developing materials, &c. I had many adventures on that journey, mostly due to the fact that I had no proper permit with me to get petrol. It was not my fault, as the Colonel of the Staff had assured me that his signature was sufficient to procure me petrol in any army; here, however, I learnt a lesson—that no permit belonging to one army is of the slightest use in any other, whatever the person who signed it may tell you. Well, we got there all right, and started back as quickly as might be. I slept in Brescia, and started for Cormons at seven in the morning. We made good travelling until dark, when it became necessary to fill up the petrol tank. I had had the brilliant idea of trying a short cut home. I have now learnt that short cuts are not advisable in the Zone of War.

Our first adventure happened when we tried to get the petrol. It was dark and pouring with rain, and as we drove into a little town, Whitehead, my Red Cross chauffeur, a first-rate man, got down to ask the way to the military petrol-depot. Not being able to make himself understood, he returned to ask me to explain. By this time a *carabiniere* appeared, and on seeing our lights rushed up and ordered us to put them out immediately. I agreed politely, and gave the order to Whitehead to put out the big ones, but to leave the little ones. On my speaking English the *carabiniere* became convinced that we were spies. He ordered us, in a very abrupt manner, to put out even the little oil lamps, which was manifestly ridiculous, as every one else in the street was using them. He said we were to go immediately with him to the police quarters. Whitehead turned to me and said that if the man insisted on his turning out the small lamps too, he should assuredly drive into the ditch in the darkness. The dark was solid, and you couldn't see your hand in front of your face. The *carabiniere* by this time was rabid with us for speaking English, and again ordered us to come with him to the headquarters of the *Carabinieri;* this I promised to do directly I had finished filling up my tank, the military depot being two doors off. He was furious, saying he forbade it, and that I must immediately give him the number of the car. This I had completely forgotten, and as the carriage was thick in mud, I told him to look for himself, which enraged him still further. I too, by this time, was getting angry, and go back I would not until the car was filled up. So I told Whitehead to drive on to the depot. Here the man in charge was charming, and had just finished filling us up when his corporal came out and whispered something in his ear. The first man, a sergeant I think, then advanced in a very shy manner and said, "I don't know how to tell you, *Signora*, but an order has just come through

on the telephone from the head of the *Carabinieri* to say that you are to be detained here until an officer arrives. I am ashamed to incommode a lady, but orders are orders, and I daren't disobey—if you would like to come into my office I should be delighted." I chose to remain in the car, as warmer and more comfortable, and wondered if I should ever get home that night. Now that I know the game better, I should be much more worried if such a thing should happen to me; but I was new to the country, and hadn't realised the many agitating things that may happen to the most respectable people in a scrap with the powerful *Carabinieri!* So I sat calmly in the car and read a book, secure in the thought of the fat case in my pocket containing innumerable permits.

After about ten minutes had passed, I heard the bell of an approaching bicycle. I did not move, and presently a large face was thrust in at the window and a gruff voice said, "The orders are that you are to accompany me at once to the headquarters of the *Carabinieri.*" I answered with much dignity, "Am I to understand that this is an arrest?" This time he spoke more civilly, "*Si, Signora.*" I informed him that I was an officer, and that if they wished to arrest me they must send an officer to do so. I then composed myself to read again and paid no further attention to the man, who was evidently much worried as to what to do, and retired to consult the sergeant of the depot as to the next procedure. I, meanwhile, was half scared and half amused at my own swagger, and much relieved when I heard the *carabiniere* depart. Then ensued another long wait, cheered by the encouraging remarks of my friend the depot sergeant, who looked at me with undisguised admiration, and murmured at intervals, "*Che coraggio!*" He also murmured that English people were known to have very bad tempers, and that it was very unsafe to excite them too much. I waited another ten minutes, and was beginning to think I had had enough waiting about, when a cheerful face showed itself at the window and saluted, saying, "*Signora,* I regret my Captain cannot come himself, but if you will accept my escort we shall soon be at Headquarters, and this tiresome matter will then be settled. I regret that I am only a *Brigadiere,* but it cannot be helped." I at once asked him to get in, and told Whitehead to go where the *Brigadiere*[1] told him. It was not far, but he made himself most agreeable, and said I must not judge the man too hardly who had originally made all the trouble, that he was young and only a *contadino,* and new to the work, &c., and that the *Carabinieri* are not what they were in peace time, when they were all picked men—that they had to

[1] A *Brigadiere* is between a N.C.O. and an officer.

take anybody they could get nowadays, &c.

Cheered by my conversation with the nice *Brigadiere*, on our arrival at the Headquarters I walked in, feeling all would be well, and that I should in a minute or two be free to continue my journey. Not at all,—I found myself in a large room fitted up as an office. In front of me sat an officer of *Carabinieri* surrounded by a half circle of other officers standing. It looked exactly like a court-martial, and I felt I was losing what little Italian I had, as well as my head! The officer at the table looked up as I came in, but did not move from his seat. I had some vague idea that it was better for me to attack first, so I began a complaint of his subordinate's manners. Suddenly, in the middle of one of my own sentences, I became aware I was being left to stand while he was comfortably sitting. I stopped in the middle of a word, and said very slowly, looking hard at him, "I do not think, *Signor Capitano*, that you have understood that I am a *Dama della Croce rossa Inglese.*" There was rustle of movement among the other officers present, and the bad-mannered (or absent-minded?) one slowly got to his feet, with a very red face, and bowed. Quickly changing my tone to a friendly one, I advanced on him with all my papers, and before he could ask for them, spread the whole lot on his table, saying, "No doubt you would like to see my papers—here they are; and while you study them I will look at your map, as I am quite lost, and do not the least know where I am"—and I walked straight past him to a big map which was hanging on the wall behind his table. The cheek of this took his breath away, and he only gasped in answer. Looking at the map enabled me to recover my somewhat rattled wits, and after a short glance at my papers he rolled them up and came to help me to find my road on the map. The tense moment was over, but as he accompanied me to the car, I felt that I had been within an ace of spending my night in a cell. I was afterwards told that I had been quite right to refuse to be arrested by a private soldier, and that it probably saved me a long wait and many disagreeables, as the officer, who was young and inexperienced, might have made things very unpleasant if I had not been so cocksure.

Our adventures were not over for that day, because hardly had we left the town when our chain broke. By this time the rain had stopped, and Whitehead spent a weary three-quarters of an hour sitting in the middle of the road mending it, with me holding one of the lamps for him. By this time it was about nine o'clock, no stars and no moon, and we had had no food since twelve o'clock. Luckily I had some meat lozenges in my pocket, which had been there many months. The usual excellent taste of glue and ink was in no way

impaired by their age, and we feasted on them gratefully. I had a map, but it was *so* dark, and all the inhabitants of the villages having gone to bed, whilst all the sentries were "strangers in those parts," that we had the greatest trouble in locating the roads we were on. Then, about ten o'clock, our chain went again,—this time it meant a much longer stop, as Whitehead, in despair, found that two links had gone. Down we sat in the mud and tried to make links out of bits of wire, &c. Nothing held, and at last we stood up and sadly agreed that we had better try and make ourselves comfortable in the car till daylight came, when suddenly I had the brilliant idea of sending him back with a lamp to where the chain broke. He stayed away a good quarter of an hour, and I was getting sleepier and sleepier, when he appeared cheerfully with both links, which he proceeded to fix on. He really was a good man, for he never got cross or disheartened, and was always willing to try anything one suggested when in a difficulty.

The chain mended, we were continuing our road, carefully feeling our way with only the little lamps (the ditches were very big and deep in that part of the country), when suddenly we were challenged by a sentry. We stopped, and he asked for our papers; we showed them, he saluted, saying they were quite in order, but we could not pass without the password for the night. He added that he was exceedingly sorry, but his orders were final; no one could pass over the bridge after nine o'clock without the password. This was the first we had heard of a bridge, and on peering out we discovered that we were standing on a bridge over a broad river, with no parapet whatever. It was lucky we had been going so carefully. We asked the sentry's advice as to how to obtain the password, and he answered that only one person could give it to us, the General of the Army Corps, who on our inquiry proved to be quartered about six miles back along the road by which we had just come. We backed carefully off the bridge and started on our weary way back to the General's quarters.

Arrived at the village, we asked the sentry at the entrance for the whereabouts of the General; he directed us to a house close to the gate. It didn't look at all like a General's quarters, but I hopefully tried a soldier who was standing at the door. His answer was that this was the Mess, and the General had left a good hour before. He did not know where he had gone to. Luckily at that moment I spied two officers going along on the other side of the street, with their collars turned up, evidently hurrying to get into the warmth of their own billets.

We hastily pursued them, and I begged them to tell me how to get the password to get over the bridge. The same answer, "You must go to the General—he is the only person who can give it to you,

and he went to bed an hour ago." At my doleful countenance, the man who was talking burst out laughing, and asked what had happened, and why I was driving about at that time of night. I told him my sad tale, and explained that we had a lot of work to do and I was most anxious to get back to Cormons that night.

The two were at once most sympathetic, and the senior one, a Major, suggested getting into the car and taking me himself to where the General lived; but he warned me that if the General had indeed gone to bed, it would be more than our lives were worth to wake him up. I gathered he was not easy, and I did not find him so.

He hadn't gone to bed, and presently appeared at the door of the motor, very gruff, and wanting to know who I was and what I was doing, and what reason I had to suppose that he had any intention of providing me with any password whatever. He also asked what business I had to rout him out at that time of night, and asked if I was aware that it was close on midnight. I answered humbly that if he would let me come in where there was a light, I could show him all my papers, telling him at the same time that I had at least fourteen different ones to prove my identity, and that I understood that he was my only hope, so I threw myself on his mercy. I caught a sign of softening in his eye, and got out of the car on the far side from where he was standing, blocking the way, and most unwillingly he led the way into the house. The kind Major, who had waited on the far side of the street until he saw what luck I had, fled when he saw me go in, and not a moment too soon, as the General turned round on reaching the door to say, "Where is that pestilential Major who showed you where I lived?" and turning to me, added, "Do you know his name?" I assured him I hadn't any idea as to who he was or where he had gone, and the General, grumbling to himself, followed me into a little room on the ground floor, where there was a fire, and some coffee on the table. I laid my papers on the table, and went to the fire to try and get warm, while he busied himself with them. I suppose he saw me looking longingly at the coffee, as he suddenly asked, still in a very grumpy voice, when I had last had anything to eat. I told him, not since midday, as we were hurrying to try and get back to Cormons that night, but that owing to breakdowns with the car I was sadly becoming convinced that we should not manage it. He glanced at the clock, and said drily, "No, I shouldn't think you would," and continued reading my papers, but looked up again at me in a few minutes to say I might take some coffee if I liked. I should think he was half an hour before he seemed to have finished, and then he began again, as if I hadn't told him already: "What do you want me to do for you?"

I repeated patiently, "May I,

please, have the password to cross the bridge?" He at once said, quite simply and plainly, "No." I got wearily on to my feet, and asked him if there was a hotel in the village. He said there was one, but it was full of his officers, and there was no other possible house. So I advanced towards the door and said good-night, I was sorry I had disturbed him for nothing. He looked up and asked me what I meant to do, and I said, "Sleep in the car."

I think his conscience smote him, as he suddenly became quite friendly and said—

"I won't give you the password, because it will only pass you into another Army, and you would have to rout up another General to get out of it again, and you might not be so successful in finding him up as you have been in finding me; so I will show you a short cut to Udine, and from there you ought to be able to find your way, as you will then be in your own Army."

He then proceeded to give the most complicated directions of "Third turn to the left, first turn to the right, then turn right again, and it doesn't look like a road," &c.

I stopped him there and said, "Nothing looks like a road in this darkness. Please let me see a map."

He thereupon brought out a map, and all became clear—his excuse for not having done it before being that he thought women could not read maps!

We then parted, and Whitehead and I drove on into the night to try our luck at more short cuts. We eventually found our way, but not without great difficulty, as, added to the darkness, there was now an impenetrable fog. We crawled home, arriving at 3 A.M., and very grateful to find some soup still simmering on the stove for us.

II.

The Austrians were determined to get the station, and shelled first the station of Cormons and then the little siding of Povia, which was at the end of our road. (They were firing fan-shape, which is always disagreeable if you are included in the fan.) The first few shells brought streams of peasants and townspeople carrying babies, and dragging small children by any portion of their persons or clothes that first came handy. They came running under our windows wailing and crying, all making for the dug-outs that were in the hill about half a kilometre behind our house. After them, at the bursting of more shells, came oxen lumbering along, goaded into a gallop by their terrified masters, who could not get them along fast enough. We became accustomed to all this, as they (the Austrians) took to sending a few shells every morning at about nine

o'clock, and we soon took very little interest in them.

It was marvellous how little damage they did. One morning they sent seventy-three high-explosive shells into and all round the station, and the sum total of the damage was one girl killed and one mule.

Our house was well under the shelter of Monte Quarin, so most of the big shells came over our heads; the smaller ones being sent from a different place, used to come straight for the house, but always fell short—luckily for us!

By this time we had got thoroughly into our work, and our clientèle was increasing by leaps and bounds. At first we used to have only one hospital or perhaps two a day to go to; but very soon they increased, and eventually we came to serving fifty-seven different hospitals—some in the Second Army and some in the Third. The roads were pretty bad the first year we were there, but after the taking of Gorizia they were soon mended and became excellent. The first winter we several times fell into the deep ditches which bordered the roads, as it was next to impossible on very wet days to see where the road ended and where the ditch began. I remember one day we had been called to one of the foremost field hospitals; it had been pouring with rain, and the road was practically under water. We were behind, and the big Austin car with the apparatus was trundling along in front, when there was a lurch, and over she went on to her side into a deep ditch full of water, which we had not known was there. We all descended into two feet of water to consult as to what was to be done. We had a rope, and tried attaching it to our touring-car. Having started up the Berliet she pulled well enough, but the X-Ray car only settled more firmly on her side into the ditch. The Austrians chose that moment to begin firing on the road; so we told Whitehead to take the Berliet on and put her under cover of some rather battered houses, and then come back to see what could be done.

We were still cogitating when a shell sang over and dropped in the field just beyond the car, followed in a few minutes by another and another. I think they had seen us, and were taking pot-shots at us—rather mean, as we had a huge red cross on the top as well as on the sides of the car. Anyway, it had the effect of making a lot of men who were sheltering under a wall come quickly to our help. In vain we said it was not worth their risking themselves; they insisted on helping, and with about twenty of them propping the car up and a lorry pulling on the road, we soon got the car out again, and none the worse for the upset. The Austrians had put about six shells all told round the car, and we were very lucky not to have had any damage.

The apparatus was so well packed and fitted that nothing had moved. The soldiers flatly refused to take any kind of reward, as they said that we were all doing the same kind of work. Whenever we got into difficulties we had the same help, and the same answer if we remonstrated. Is it a wonder that we love the Italian soldier?

III.

For six months Mrs Hollings and I carried on the work alone. We used to start out about nine o'clock in the morning with Hewett (a Red Cross man) driving, and Mrs Hollings and myself in front, and Whitehead, the other Red Cross driver, at the back. Arrived at the Hospital that had sent for us, the first thing to do was to send an orderly to find the Director, or failing him the Head Surgeon. Then, accompanied by him, a voyage of discovery was necessary to find a suitable place in which to put our apparatus. This was usually simple, but we have had to work in many strange places —in granaries, lavatories, passages, and two or three times in a mortuary. Often, too, in cellars, when there was a bombardment going on; but cellars were never very practical, as they were usually damp, and made all our wires short circuit.

The spot settled, the order was given to unpack. One of us usually went downstairs to superintend the unloading, while the other stayed in the room to receive and arrange the stuff as it came up. The important point was to find a place that could be made dark, also one that had a window looking out on the side of the house where the car was standing, so that the cable which conveyed the current could come up through the window.

The doctors soon learnt what we wanted, and when they had time, used to have a room prepared before our arrival—windows covered, rooms cleared, &c. They were very patient, too, waiting while we arranged our tube, got it centred, and tried its light. We took turns as to which of us sat at the switch-board and managed the current, and which looked through the screen and searched for the damage—broken bone, bullet, piece of metal, stone, or other foreign body. Looking through the screen is called radioscoping, as distinguished from radiographing, which is the taking of the photograph.

Once all was arranged and the light from the tube satisfactory, the wounded man was brought in, usually marvellously patient and good. A few of them were terrified, and convinced we were going to take their arm or leg off there and then, but, as a rule, they were very easy to pacify and did their best to help us in our search. If asked to help, they

would always make a great effort to keep quiet, however much the wound was hurting. They were wonderful people, and their pluck and endurance most touching.

We used to begin by asking the surgeon to tell us any symptoms he had noticed, as this often helped in determining the direction that the bullet might have taken.

I remember one interesting case of an officer. He had been brought in two days before, wounded under the right ear apparently by a bullet. The hole was minute and had bled very little, and he had no signs of cerebral disturbance whatever. I was doing the radioscoping that day, and the light was at its best. I searched through his head and found nothing, then his neck and shoulders; the surgeon had told me that he had not noticed any unusual symptoms. The officer himself then looked up and said, "Would it help you to know that when I was hit I coughed a good deal and choked up some blood?" Of course it helped a great deal! Down we went to his lungs, searched them thoroughly, and finally found the bullet low down on the left-hand side, below the diaphragm. It had gone through both lungs.

We were always finding odd things too. Another time that I was screening (we were at the hospital of a surgeon who was always a little difficult to work for, although we got to be the greatest friends afterwards), a man was brought in badly wounded in the groin. The light was not behaving very well, and it was difficult to see, added to which the room was not properly dark. I saw at once that there was something there, but what it was I could not see. The surgeon got very impatient, saying, "Nonsense; if you can see enough to be sure there is something, you must know what it is." One firm rule we had made, which was, never under any circumstances to allow ourselves to make any guesses. If we were not sure we always said so, and would not allow ourselves to be bullied into saying any more. This surgeon got rabid, because I would not even make a guess at what it was that the man had in his leg, and when I would only answer "*Chi lo sa*" to all his questions, said furiously, "You are no better than a professional radiographer; they all say that whenever they are asked a simple question!" The man was marked and taken away, and the work went on. I think that we had thirty-seven cases that afternoon in the one hospital, so the subject was not referred to again; but the next time we were sent for the surgeon came up to us and said, "Have you yet thought what that foreign body could have been? It is quite safe to tell me now, because I have operated and know what it was." I told him that I was sure it was not metal, and that it did not look like ordinary bone or like stone, as it had looked porous to me, but that might have been because my eyes were tired, as

we had had a lot of work that day. He brought his hand from behind his back and produced a piece of another man's skull, which he had found exactly beneath the pencil mark I had made on the soldier's skin.

Another interesting case was that of an officer who had been hit in the jaw. He was brought to us at Cormons to radiograph. We scoped him first and found a diamond-shaped piece of metal just under the angle of the right jaw. He went back to hospital and was operated on the same day. Next day the surgeon brought him back, saying, "I have got the piece out. It was bone and not metal." That time I committed myself, and said, "I am sure it was metal that I saw." The surgeon, with a gentle grin, produced the bit of bone that he had taken out in the morning, saying, "I thought you would say that, so I brought the bone." I had to own that it was exactly the same shape and size, but insisted on screening him again. There was the bit of metal exactly where we had last seen it, and we took two more radiographs to prove its presence. To make a long story short, they operated again and found nothing, and finally sent the boy back to a field hospital where another operation was arranged for. He was just going to be given his anæsthetic when he sat up, coughed violently, and choked the piece of metal up in the Surgeon's face. I suppose the two foreign bodies had lain absolutely one under the other, thus making it appear as if there were only one.

Our apparatus was very successful as a whole, and if we were asked to put together another mobile X-Ray machine we should make very few changes.

When first we got out there we always had the same thing said to us: "We are delighted you have come, but your machine won't last long; we have had other mobile sets here, and they never last more than a month. Nothing can stand the knocking about of the roads." They gave us one month to stick it out without breaking down, and we managed eleven before anything went wrong, and then the breakdown was neither the fault of the apparatus nor of the roads. A piece of metal hit the dynamo and sliced the end off. It was despairing, as we were up to our eyes in work at the minute. Luckily we were dining with the King and Queen of Italy that very night, and at once, when we told them about what had happened, the Queen said she could lend us another dynamo. Arrangements were made to send down to Rome for it, and it arrived in three or four days. Of course, it had then to be fitted on in the place of the other, which took a little time; but, thanks to the General, who gave orders that it was to take precedence over other work at the Auto Park, we had it back and ready for work in a very few days.

We had been on our way

to a small Field Hospital far behind the lines when, without any warning, a big shell came whizzing over our heads, and burst in the little stream that ran alongside of the road. Falling in the soft mud of the stream, it spattered us all over with mud and stones. Mrs Hollings remarked gently that she thought that the car had been hit, but I denied it firmly, saying it was only stones; and we continued our journey a little faster, in case another came that way.

There was only this one narrow lane to the hospital where we were going. Arrived at the hospital, we found every one in a great state of excitement, as Whitehead, who had already arrived in the other car, had said we were just behind him, and they were quite sure we were dead! But we soon reassured them on that point, and got the men on to unloading the machine. No one could think why the enemy should choose to waste time by shelling a little empty valley so far behind the lines, where there were no troops, and never had been any. While we were talking and the men were unloading, they sent three or four more over, all of them falling in a radius of about 500 yards. Within five minutes of the arrival of the first shell, a *carabiniere* hurried up on a bicycle to see if any one was hurt: they are a wonderfully efficient body, and always to be found when wanted. We had a bad head-case to X-Ray for an immediate operation, and luckily determined to take a radiograph at once without screening. We got a plate and turned on the light, which was beautiful. Our usual time exposure for a head was ninety seconds; it ran perfectly for about fifty seconds, and suddenly the machine struck work altogether. We hurried out to see what could be the matter, and found Whitehead already under the motor. I, being the smallest, crawled under too. The sight that met my eyes was a sad one: the end of the dynamo was completely sliced off by a piece of shell, and all the wires had wound themselves round and round the main shaft. You never saw such a mess in your life, and why it had worked at all I cannot think. The still more extraordinary thing was that when we came to develop the radiograph it was a beauty, and enabled the surgeon to save the man's life!

Our journey back was quite interesting too. We waited for some time, while the Austrians continued to put shells into the little valley, at about ten minutes' interval; and at last, as there had not been one for quite a long time, we made up our minds to start. I was driving this time, and we had hardly got half-way down the line when we both heard the gun that had fired all the other shots. We neither of us looked at each other or spoke, and continued firmly on our way. It was no use hurrying, as we might have

run into it; and it was no use stopping, as it might have landed on our heads; so on we went. We heard a long-drawn-out whine coming nearer and nearer; it finally landed with a tremendous noise, bang in the middle of the road we had that moment left, carrying with it a big tree, and making a large hole in the ground. And the moral of this little episode is that it is no use fussing about where you are, as shells may come anywhere, even to the quietest and most unexpected places.

As we were finding our work increasing daily, Mrs Hollings and I asked the Red Cross to send us out some one to develop plates for us. We found that often we only got home at ten o'clock at night when there was a push on, and that however late we were the plates had to be developed the same night, or they were not dry enough to send off the following morning in time for the surgeons to operate. Of course, in damp weather we found that they were not always dry by nine o'clock, even when developed the night before, and then we had to have recourse to alcohol to dry them; but as a rule a night propped up in the rack would dry them in time to leave the house by 8.30 or 9 o'clock.

The Red Cross sent us out Mrs Hicks, who stayed with the section a little over her six months' engagement. She soon became most useful, not only in developing, but also in running the small Medical Supplies Stores apparatus. This was set up as a permanency in the house, so that if the neighbouring hospitals wanted to see anything in a hurry, and Mrs Hollings and I were out, she could run it for them. It was not strong enough to knock about on the roads, but did very well in the house.

IV.

The days of a big action were always dreary for us, as the hospitals were too busy dressing the wounded, which were coming in in quantities, to want X-Rays, except in a few isolated cases where instant operations were needed. On the day of the taking of Gorizia we telephoned to the head of the Sanitá to ask if we should take up some dressings to the various dressing stations. On getting the answer we started off in our car, driven by Whitehead, to take bandages, cotton-wool, gauze, and other useful articles up to the farthest forward dressing stations that we could get to. Arrived at Lucenico, we found that the dressing station at the other end of the village we had been making for had had to come back, as the village was all on fire, and was being pretty heavily shelled, mostly by shrapnel, which were bursting in every direction.

The moment the doctors of the dressing station saw us and our large box of surgical necessaries they all fell upon them, and although we remonstrated feebly, saying they were meant to go on to other stations as well, they took the whole lot! They did not hide their joy at the unexpected contribution, and we were very much pleased at the success of our expedition. Our car being now empty, there was no further necessity for our staying, and we were turning homewards when one of the officers asked if we would care to go up to the observation post on the hill above, as the guns were just going into Gorizia, and we should be able to see them cross the bridges from there. Of course we cared! . . . and away we toiled along endless trenches and under covered passages, hearing all sorts of exciting things going on and unable to see out. The trenches are maddening for that! Then up and up, an officer who was leading us going horribly fast, excusing himself for hurrying us by saying that his gun was to be one of the first to lead over the bridge and he had very little time in which to get back.

Half-way up we came upon rows of soldiers sitting on the side of the hill in their gas masks. They looked like a row of Spanish inquisitors, as they were all sitting in dead silence. Then we met the Colonel of the batteries of that hill, and he naturally wanted to know where we were going and who we were. We were very much blown and purple in the face, and began pulling out our permits, explaining between gasps who we were. Before we could finish he burst out, "Oh yes, I know all about you; you are most welcome to go up"; and turning to our guide said, "Make haste, you have only ten minutes to get to the top and down to your battery." We ran the rest of the way, and arrived speechless at the observation post. Luckily our guide was not as blown as we were; he explained hastily who we were to the young observer, and then with a polite wave and salute was gone. We had our glasses, and we settled down to watch the most wonderful sight imaginable.

The whole landscape was one mass of flame and smoke. The village just beneath us was red with smouldering fire, and shrapnel were bursting, with their red smoke, every two minutes over it.[1] The bridge over the Isonzo was broken in many places, and great holes and gaps showed the water through them. As we watched, we saw the first gun appearing down the road towards the bridge, going at a good smart trot. As it came fully into sight, it broke into a hand-gallop; a big high-explosive burst at the other end of the

[1] The smoke of the Austrian shrapnel was red, and of the Italian shrapnel grey or white.

bridge, but the gun kept steadily on, swung round the bend, and off up into the town. It was followed closely by another, and yet another. Shells by this time were bursting all round them, and we were breathless for fear one should be hit. Then, just as two guns were on the bridge at the same time, came a big shell bang in the middle of the bridge; a huge smoke went up, and nothing could be seen of the bridge or of the guns. As the smoke lifted, we saw that one gun was down, the other making a big detour to avoid it: it seemed as if all must be killed—a mass of struggling men and beasts—and a groan went up from the officers standing near us. But no! They picked themselves up, hauled the horses to their feet, and, as at the Military Tournament in London, quickly put on another wheel, and were up and off before you could count five. There was a roar of cheering from all the men who had been standing just below us; the officers turned, quickly made us a bow, saying, "It is our turn now," and ran off down the steps, leaving us in sole possession of the post. We stayed there another full half hour watching the crossing of the cavalry, a most impressive sight. They took the bridge at a gallop singly, lying flat on their horses' necks, the shells falling steadily on the road and on the bridge; but we did not see any of them hit, why, I cannot think, as there was scarcely a square inch, at least so it seemed to us, that was not covered with explosives. It was getting too dark to see by this time, so we descended to find our car, which we had left under the shelter of the church tower, in a little hamlet at the foot of the hill. We were rather agitated at not finding it at once, but Whitehead soon appeared, saying that as the church tower had twice been hit while he was there, he had thought it as well to move away from its vicinity.

The next six weeks were so full of work that I have no remembrance of any particular incident. We were on the road usually by 8.30 or 9 o'clock, with six or seven hospitals to fit into the day, some close together, others as much as ten or even twenty kilometres apart. The distant ones of course lost us a lot of time getting from one to the other. At other times we would go to one hospital and stay there all day, screening all the wounded as they came in, marking where the bullet or broken bone was, and passing the man straight on into the operating-room, where he was operated on at once. When there was much work, the surgeons used to leave us entirely to ourselves to find and mark the bullet or piece of shell. We used, when possible, to mark its position on the skin in front, then turn the limb over, scope it again, and mark it on the side. The perpendiculars from these marks gave a right angle, and the bullet was naturally at the apex of the angle.

I remember that on one busy day we did 67 examinations in the morning. This quantity usually meant about 12 or 13 plates all to be developed and dried before next morning, and when you think that each plate takes roughly fifteen minutes in the developer and fixative, and two hours in water, you can understand how that often before the Red Cross sent us out a developer, Mrs Hollings and I having come in from work at 10 P.M., were still developing at 2 in the morning.

V.

We used to take all the Italian orderlies and drivers out in turn to learn the work of loading and unloading, fetching plates out of the car, helping to carry the wounded, &c., and they had become very useful. We found we hardly ever had to tell them a thing twice, for when once they understood the whys and wherefores of a thing they never forgot it.

Another thing that is so excellent about the Italians is that they never break anything: you can trust them with even the X-Ray tubes and have no qualms. They were always willing, and never thought about their own comforts. Food, rest, nothing counted as long as we got our jobs for the day satisfactorily ended. In all the time we were in Italy I only once knew a man show insubordination, and he, I think, was rather odd in the head. He could *not* understand that he might not go out whenever it pleased him!

Although the Italians had kindly given Mrs Hollings and myself the honorary grade of Majors in the Italian Army, we never punished the men ourselves; if it became necessary for any small fault, we asked the Captain of the Engineers to whom our men were attached for rations and pay to give them their punishments. It usually consisted of their pay being docked for a week, or a couple of days' cells (this last they rather liked, as they used to sleep all the time).

Italian discipline always appeared to us to be much more severe than ours. Rules were very strict about the time the soldiers reported themselves at night. Any soldier found out and about after 9 o'clock P.M. was instantly looked up by the *Carabinieri* unless he had a special permit from his chief, which stated that he was out on duty. Soldiers going on leave had to go to the baths and be thoroughly washed and disinfected before leaving, and the same rules were observed on their return, the junior officers being shut in with the men on their return from leave and often spending the night in a room strewn with straw, all awaiting together their bath and disinfection. Several of them told us that the first night back from leave is one of the most unpleasant in the campaign, and they mostly

spend it walking up and down the room.

Looting of any kind is looked upon very sternly, and any man caught looting or merely souvenir-hunting is very severely punished.

You never see any drunkenness amongst the soldiers: in the two years we spent in Italy I never saw a single Italian soldier the worse for drink. In the matter of cruelty to animals the Italian Army is also very severe. The slightest hint of a soldier being cruel to his beast and he is punished very severely, men being sent to what are called the Punishment Trenches on the second report; the reason for this being not only humanity, but also expediency, as every man is taught the importance of keeping his beast fit and well for the work he has to do.

The Italian soldier is always very well turned out, and looks generally exceedingly smart. Even close up to the Front he usually wears a small white choker inside his collar, which always gives the appearance of cleanliness. How they always managed to have them clean I do not know, but somehow they always did. Their breeches were very well cut, and they certainly were the smartest looking of the Allies up at the Front.

Another thing that struck us very favourably was the absolute want of red tape. We never saw any of it, and I heard English officials say the same thing. There were so seldom any difficulties made. Instead of the usual insurmountable rules and regulations to be found in other armies, whatever we asked for was given with the best of goodwill, and in consequence we were careful to ask for as little as possible.

Another thing that impressed us very much was the cleanliness of the hospitals. Of course, we know nothing of the Base, as we were at the Front all the time, and so saw only the field hospitals and dressing stations, but the cleanliness struck us very forcibly. We had every opportunity of judging, because we were in and out of them at all times and in all places. We saw them when they were so busy with fresh cases pouring in after an action that the surgeons and orderlies did not know where to turn. We saw them at all hours of the day and also at all hours of the night. Often when the work was heavy we stayed on all night to screen the cases as they came in, and always the same good organisation and cleanliness. One hospital I remember which had been prepared for 150 patients received 380 after a big battle; the staff, of course, was worried, but by no means lost its head, and very soon tents had been erected in the courtyard and gardens, straw mattresses or straw-stuffed sacks borrowed or made, all the men housed till they could have their wounds attended to, and the least badly wounded sent on to the other hospitals.

After an action such as the taking of Podgora and Gorizia the Labour Battalions were

turned on immediately to tidy up; and although we were generally on the roads within a couple of days, all was tidy and clean, all the horrors taken away, the roads cleared of débris and the shell-holes filled.

Our first business visit to Gorizia (we had been there once before to see the lie of the land in case we were sent for in a hurry) was an interesting one. Mrs Hollings happened to be late that morning and we started a good ten minutes after we meant to. As we got down to the bridge of Lucenico it was being shelled, so the *carabiniere* on duty signed to us to wait under cover of a bit of wall, and to be ready to go directly he made a sign, and then to go fast, so as to get over before another shell came. We kept our engine running, and I kept her in gear with the clutch ready to slip in the second we got the signal. When it came, we went as hard as we could at the bridge, and got across nicely as the next shell burst just behind us. The driving was not easy, as the holes in the bridge were many and large, and lots of them had been stuffed with mattresses! We buzzed up the hill past the station of Gorizia and along the main street, the Corso, a fine wide street with trees on either side—plane-trees I think they were.

The houses were knocked about a certain amount, but not nearly as much as we had expected, and not nearly as much as they were afterwards by the Austrians. As we got opposite to the Opera House we stopped and asked a *carabiniere* to tell us where the hospital of the Fate Bene Fratelli was. He pointed up the next street, saying, "It is up there, but you cannot go there, it is being shelled and no one may go down the street." We argued the point, saying we had to go as we had orders, and it could not be helped if it was being shelled. We felt very noble in making this statement, but it was true all the same! The *carabiniere* gave in at once, and we proceeded up Via Alvarez to a place which was covered with débris, large coping-stones, split beams, &c. We were greeted with enthusiasm by the Director, who had been expecting us, but owned he was glad we had not turned up ten minutes sooner, as we should have come in for three high-explosives (quite as well that my partner had been late that morning). Why the hospital was still in existence I don't know. Only one had hit it direct, but that one had shaken it to its foundations besides destroying the top floor and most of the next.

They proposed that we should work in the cellar, whither they had taken all the wounded; but that was impossible, as it was too damp, and we should have had short circuiting all the time, so we went on a voyage of discovery and found a small room which suited our purpose. It was only just big enough for our trestles and stretcher, and the explosions had done something odd to the

doorway, which had gone all crooked. There was also a big split in the wall, which was considerably wider by the time we had finished, but it did very well, and we soon got through our work for the morning.

The cellar full of wounded was very impressive. The darkness was only lit by a little streak of light through a crack in the wall, and one could just see the wounded wrapped in sheets or blankets lying in rows along the walls. When Mrs Hollings and I appeared at the door we heard ourselves being hailed by a high-pitched feeble voice, and on going to see who was calling we found a poor old peasant woman sitting up on a sofa; she had her head bandaged, and with her wrinkled face and bare skinny throat and outstretched arms, with the thin streak of light on her, she looked like a Rembrandt picture. The heavy darkness and the hardly-seen figures of the other wounded lying all round her added to the picturesqueness of the scene. She was terribly afraid that we should go away without her having been able to say what she wanted, and was so agitated lest we should not understand; she kept on repeating, "the signor Capitano." I tried to reassure her, saying he was quite close, but soon made out that she wanted to tell us that he had saved her. He had gone to the top of the house when the first shell arrived and carried her down in his arms four flights of stairs, and returned to fetch another woman who was also a peasant, having been wounded in the streets. The old woman kept saying, "But I am so old, and yet he risked his life for me!" The first shell had taken most of the roof off the house, so he had indeed done a brave thing in going up to the very top to fetch her. The next shell that hit the house entirely wrecked the room where she had been, and the whole of the staircase. The name of that Captain was Captain Fadda (a Sardinian), and the old woman was an Austrian peasant. It is only an example of how the Italians treat the Austrians, whether they are their prisoners or only the peasant people in the conquered territories. We saw unfailing kindness to them wherever we went. We had many Austrian prisoners to radiograph, and the surgeons and orderlies treated them with exactly the same consideration that they gave to their own men.

VI.

Once we had been into Gorizia our work in that town became continual, so the General gave us a house there in September 1916, which we kept until we left in October 1917. We established an orderly in the house, and used to sleep there often when our work kept us very late or when a big attack was expected, so as to be on the spot for bad cases.

We often had to use our X-Rays for the unfortunate inhabitants of the town, children who would play in the streets, and women who had been caught when returning from the Municipio, where coal and food was served out to them. One poor woman for whom we were called in had eleven wounds in her back. She had been asleep in bed and a shell had pitched into the basement of her house, and the pieces had come up through the floor and through her bed. Women were very hard to radiograph. It was something in the consistency of their flesh. We found the same difficulty with some men who had very fine skin, and nearly always had to give ten or fifteen seconds longer pose for their radiographs.

Some of the hospitals were hit pretty nearly every day, and we often wondered how the surgeons were able to do their work, as they could never know when a shell would choose to come into their operating-room. I have seen one or two of them just mad with nerves and rage, asking how any one could expect them to do good work under the circumstances; but as a rule they took it very calmly and shrugged their shoulders saying it was "Destino." One hospital in particular was always catching it, and we never could imagine why it was not moved. Twice when we arrived there its operating-room had been blown out, and once our radiographic room; at another time a shell had come in and smashed part of the staircase. They always used to invite us to go up to the roof of that hospital when our work was done, as it afforded the best view in Gorizia of the enemy's trenches; but to me it was a doubtful pleasure, as, being very high up, I always felt what a horrible long way it would be to fall if a shell came just when we were there.

The Austrian shooting was very good. I remember one house, the house of a General that they meant to get, and there they had put one shell into the dining-room, where it went to ground behind a case of empty syphons and did not explode; another fell in the General's bedroom, which he had happened to leave half an hour earlier than usual that morning (luckily for him, or he would have been caught, as this one blew the side of the house out), and a third exploded in the garden in front of the room where he worked. No one was even wounded, but it was not the fault of the shooting!

Our journeys in and out of Gorizia were unceasingly full of interest, and we hardly went in or out during those first months without something happening.

There was one day that stands out in the memory of both of us. We had sent Whitehead and an orderly on with the apparatus, and we were following quietly after in the ambulance car. We had got nearly down to the bridge over the Isonzo, the Grafenberg Bridge as it was called, when

a sentry stopped us and said, "The bridge is not passable, it is being shelled." We pulled close in under the banks for shelter (they are luckily very steep just there) and composed ourselves to wait until the bridge became healthy again. The sight was a very fine one, the shells plopping into the water all round the bridge and the splash going mountain-high. Other cars came and ranged themselves in behind us and well under the bank. A Staff car bustled up, and the occupant, a stout old colonel, tumbled out and hurried into a dug-out. An Italian ambulance driver, a Red Cross officer called Gotland, came up and talked to us, and we were watching the shells with much interest when the cry went up for an ambulance. There were only two ambulances there, ours and the Italian one; we bowed politely and said "Your turn," but his car turned out to be already full of sick officers he was taking back to hospital in Cormons, so we hastily emptied the radiographic table and one or two other things that we had in the car on to the ground, and bundled up the hill to the bridgehead, whence the cry had come. We stopped just short of it in a place where I knew I could turn, as the car I was driving had the unpleasant habit of turning round and round on her own axis when asked to turn to the right in a tight place, and plenty of room was needed or she would have taken us into the river. While I was engaged in my cautious turn, Mrs Hollings jumped out and ran up to the bridgehead, where the wounded were being collected. They packed eight into the car and some others into a lorry, and I started off with my lot to the nearest hospital. I had looked round for my companion, but she was only just visible up at the bridge, which they were still shelling, helping with the other wounded, so I went off without her and deposited my load at the hospital. The car behaved quite well until I had got rid of the wounded, when it proceeded to turn round and round in the hospital yard, and I had to get two soldiers to disentangle the wheels for me. On the way up to the hospital, in passing the English ambulance section, I had shouted to them that there was work for them at the bridge, and by the time I had unloaded my men and started to go back the Englishmen had already gone.

When I got back the firing had stopped, and I was relieved to find Mrs Hollings waiting for me by the side of the road. She had stayed at the bridgehead with a man who had been very badly hit, until he died; that is why she had not been able to come up with the ambulance.

The very next day we had an episode of the same description: a shell burst in the road in front of us, and a worker in the road had the top of his head blown off. We did what we could, which was not much, and put him into our car under the shelter of a wall, where he could lie comfortably

without any one to worry him, and Mrs Hollings sat with him; but there was nothing to be done, and he died in about half an hour without having shown any sign of consciousness or pain. There was another man hit at the same time, who was much hurt in his feelings at our not paying more attention to him. He had been hit between the fingers, a piece of shell having torn the flesh. He whined like an offended baby, but was soon comforted when I paid attention and poured iodine on it and tied it up.

The approaches to the bridges were generally crammed with incident, and often, especially at night, were very difficult driving. The road was generally crowded with troops, lorries, and mules going both ways, usually in dead silence and pitch darkness, as no light was allowed of any kind. The high screens on each side of the road blocked out even the flashes from the guns which lit the sky, and except for the noise of the distant enemy batteries, broken occasionally by the roar of one of ours stationed alongside the road, the only noise was the shuffling of many feet and an occasional muttered curse when some one bumped into some one else.

One night, about 11 P.M., I had left Mrs Hollings in Gorizia, and was on my way back to Cormons, with Whitehead driving. It was pitchy dark, and when we got down to the banks of the river we found ourselves in an unholy jam. It was impossible to move one way or the other: there were kicking mules, backing horses, and huge lorries or camions, while the usual *carabiniere* seemed to be absent for once. I descended from the front of the car into the crowd, and found there was barely room to get between the various carts and motors, so tightly jammed were they. At last I wriggled my way through, and discovered an agitated *carabiniere* with a small lantern, carefully shaded, in his hand. On my appeal to him to make way for us, he said it was impossible, that the jam had been there almost an hour already, and that he was quite helpless alone. I suggested that if I went to one end of the block with my electric torch, and if he stayed at this end, perhaps we might get them on the move. He agreed hopefully, and back I toiled through the crowd, telling them as I passed to be ready to move directly the one in front moved, even if it was only an inch. I forget how it was eventually done, but between us we soon got them on the move, and we managed to get our motor through and down to the bridge. There it was so dark we could not see where the bridge, a pontoon, ended or began. Out I had to get again and walk over just in front of the car with my electric torch lit inside my hand, so that only a little red glow showed Whitehead where I was and where the centre of the bridge was. I was in a blue funk, because it was so slippery from wet that I nearly fell at every

step, and if I had gone down the car would have been sure to run over me, as Whitehead owned he could not see an inch in front of his face, and my light was very small!

We always had adventures on that bridge: one time a shell caught a cart immediately behind us, and at the same time another landed in the road immediately before us. It must be remembered that the nearest Austrian trenches were barely a mile beyond the town.

VII.

The Italians used to send operating sections very close up to the Front. They consisted of two or three of the best surgeons, and established themselves in the most advanced posts, so as to treat the abdominal wounds and the worst head wounds. They said that if you could operate on abdominal cases within an hour, or at most two hours, there was a chance of saving them which they certainly would not have if sent back to a field hospital in a shaky ambulance before being operated on. These sections used us very much; and later, when we had more apparatus at our disposal, we used to lend complete plants to some of them, sometimes with an assistant to do the work for them, or, if we had not an assistant free, we used to leave a plant with them and go there ourselves when there was a big attack expected. They established themselves in cellars or in the same house as a dressing station, or sometimes in a cave.

For the Bainsizza attack one of these sections was established in a tunnel, and we were asked to place an apparatus and two assistants in it. It was a branch of the Hospital Citta di Milano (a hospital given by private subscriptions from the people of Milan). They wanted their own plant at the main hospital, so asked us for ours, as being more easily moved in case of necessity. We went to look at the tunnel before they took it in hand, and a more unprepossessing spot could hardly have been imagined. It had been used formerly as a railway tunnel, the line running through it to Gorizia; then, during the fighting for the Plava Valley, the Austrians had used it to house infantry. After that the Italians used it for guns, and later for a mule stable, so the mess was knee-deep! It was about 300 metres long. It will give you an idea of the general state of the ground when I tell you that outside I had slipped going up the railway embankment, and, having fallen on my hands and knees, I could not get the smell of putrefaction off my hands for two or three days, try as I might.

The top and sides of the tunnel were all soot, and the ground, in places where there was not solid slime, was

covered with evil-smelling water. A nice place to make a hospital of! And yet the two surgeons were as pleased as Punch with it, and assured us that we should not know it when we returned in a fortnight. They were quite right! It was beautifully done. The sides and walls had been whitewashed throughout, the slush cleared away, and the water pumped out. Wooden huts had been built down one side of the tunnel, with cement and wooden floors, and a movable operating tent put up in the entrance, where it would catch the most light. The artificial lighting was to have been petrol gas; but we managed to procure a dynamo and lighting set, which we set up at the same time as our own apparatus, so that they had electric light all through the tunnel.

It must have been a dreary place to be ill in, notwithstanding all the care spent on it; but the wounded only stayed there a very short time. They were only the very worst cases, and it was soon settled one way or the other for them. But the ones that were going to get better were moved, as a rule, not more than two or three days after being operated upon.

They had built a special hut for the X-Ray, and had attached a little room on to it for the assistants to sleep in, about six feet by five feet; it took their camp-beds quite well, and one dressed at a time. I believe they managed all right. In any case they never complained about anything—never!

Another operating section, to whom we lent an apparatus and an assistant, had taken up their quarters in an old convent on the outskirts of Gorizia, one side of the house being in full view of the Austrian trenches. That side of the house, of course, could not be inhabited, and towards the end of the time that the Italians were in possession of the town the section had to retreat down to the cellars and stay there entirely. I heard that the head surgeon behaved splendidly. He stuck to his work till all the Italians had left the town, refusing to leave while yet there remained one soldier who might need him. I have not heard what became of him and his gallant section. He was seen by one of the English ambulance-drivers (the last to leave the town) packing up his operating apparatus at about four in the afternoon, and the Austrians are known to have entered at five o'clock; so whether he got away or was taken prisoner I know not. His name was Surgeon-Major Terrabrami.[1]

[1] While mentioning the Italian surgeon, I should like to note the plucky conduct of Miss Vera Woodroffe, one of our assistants. She had been left to go on with the work in Gorizia, and stayed on in Terrabrami's hospital after we had gone home. I have since been told that, when the break at Caporetto happened, she was repeatedly urged to give up her work and return to the Section Headquarters at Cormons; but she firmly insisted on staying on until the

VIII.

Our work used to be very uneven; sometimes two or three days would pass without any calls coming, and the section would relapse into despair, and feel that our work was bad and that we had better retire to England, a miserable failure and wanted by no one; then would come an attack and the other extreme of despair would seize us. Telephone messages and telegrams would pour in night and day. Motor bicycles blocked the doors, and orderlies waited patiently at the bottom of the stairs to catch us as we went out, with demands for the car to be sent immediately in at least six different directions at the same time, and the heap of calls on the engagement-table grew higher and higher till we despaired of ever reducing the heap.

The record day when the section was at its full complement was 121 examinations in seven different hospitals, the hospitals averaging six to twelve kilometres apart, three of them being in Gorizia.

The country was very varied, the road to Gorizia being quite flat; but most of the other roads were up steep mountains, some of them difficult driving, especially at night.

Owing to a big subscription having been got up in London by our friends, we had been able to equip a second car. The Red Cross had provided us with a Fiat chassis (besides the one which the Italian Army had given us), so we had in all two radiographic cars with apparatus complete, two Medical Association sets and several duplicate parts, so that if anything went wrong with one plant we could always supplement it with the spare parts.

The Red Cross sent us out a lot more help after our first assistant, Mrs Hicks, left us; Miss Farrar, Miss Grant, Miss Gretton, Miss Chapman, Miss Hanbury Williams, Miss North, all came at different times and stayed their six months. Some had had some experience before, others had not, but we found that whatever their experience they usually had to learn almost everything afresh. The usual X-Ray Assistant's work in a hospital was very different to ours, and more resembled the work we had done in our long apprenticeship in Paris—such as the setting of the tube correctly in the early morning, cleaning all the visible parts, handing the screen to the radiographer, timing the exposures, and cleaning the table after each patient. Then the eternal developing of the plates. All this some of them

---

hospital left. She saw every one leave Gorizia—even the English ambulances—but stayed on until forcibly fetched by her new Commandant. She left at 2 A.M. and the hospital left at 4 P.M., almost too late; but I have since heard that it got away all right.

could do; but the posing of the patient, the anatomical knowledge necessary for judging the position of a foreign body, and necessary above all for knowing what was normal and what was abnormal, they none of them had, and we found it very difficult, not to say impossible, to teach all this in the short time we had at our disposal.

The section were perfectly splendid in the way they put their backs into the work, and one never heard a word of remonstrance however much work there was going. During the whole two years we were in Italy, except for one or two exceptions, our assistants were splendid workers—as keen as we were to make the section a success, and never grudging of trouble or health as long as the work was got through. In fact, our difficulty often was to make them knock off occasionally and take a rest. That is the worst and the best of women workers: they are so anxious to show how strong they are that they work till they drop, and are indignant if any rest is suggested. We used to insist on an hour's rest in the middle of the day. All Italians have their siesta, and after a bit our section followed suit, and I am sure that hour's rest, as well as the fresh air when going from hospital to hospital, enabled us all to get through so much work without breaking down.

Of course, in the winter the work was as nothing compared to the summer months. The assistants all came out to us about December 1916, just as the Italian Army had practically gone into winter quarters, and the casualties we had to deal with were consequently but small. The time was not wasted, however, as all the newcomers were learning the work so as to be ready for the spring offensive. During the last six months the Red Cross also provided the section with a secretary, Miss Henderson, who proved most useful.

Mrs Hollings and I had been urged for some months to give up X-Rays, as our hands and eyes had begun to show some signs of being slightly affected by the Rays, so our own work during the last six months that we were out there consisted mostly of supervising that of the other members of the section. After working so long ourselves we found it very difficult to let others take it on, but when we began lending apparatus and assistants to the different operating centres, as well as having the two X-Ray cars always on the road, we found we had plenty to do to keep the whole lot of machinery in order. We managed altogether to raise by hook or by crook five machines, and had lent many of our spare parts to hospitals whose machines would not work, so our time was spent mostly in helping to put to rights the ones that had struck work.

About three months before, the authorities had given us an

electrician, and we found him of the greatest use. At first we scandalised him by the things we used to do to our machines; but after a time he found that although we knew no theory of electricity and could not discourse on the matter, yet that experience on our apparatus for nearly three years had taught us the way to get the best results out of the machines that they were capable of giving, and that we had learnt how to locate an injury in our plant as quickly as the plant enabled us to locate a foreign body in a man. So the three of us used to travel the country in different directions, doing our best to mend and put various apparatus in order.

Another plant that we had the handling of was a big Austrian one, found in a damaged house in Gorizia. Mrs Hollings had the arrangement of that entirely, and she first put it up in a big hospital in Gorizia; but it had to be removed soon, as the hospital was shelled so often, and we obtained leave from the Governor of the town to put it up in a very large hospital in Cormons. It was a great success there, and I believe did a lot of work. I suppose it has gone back to its original owners now.

IX.

In March 1917, when the assistants had become fairly proficient, Mrs Hollings made up her mind to go and live entirely in Gorizia; she said she found it more peaceful and soothing, infinitely preferring the incessant noise of three or four batteries below the garden, and the frequent scream and bursting of shells in the neighbourhood, to our pleasant conversation at the headquarters of the section at Cormons! So we divided up the orderlies and cars, and she stayed there practically always, until our departure from the section. I was very much against it for some time, as I thought splitting our forces might lead to confusion. I think it did at times! But her theory was that the cases in Gorizia were of such an urgent type, that the three-quarters of an hour that it took us to get in there might just make all the difference to some men's lives. In this she was right, as she had an enormous number of cases there, and when we established an apparatus in Hospital No. 86, with two of our members to live there, Mrs Hollings' presence was quite indispensable, as she looked after their plant, as well as doing the work of the other hospitals in the town. Our house in Gorizia had a most convenient roof, and when we had time to spare we used to lie flat on the top of it, so as not to show above the parapet, and watch the troops assaulting San Marco and San Gabriele. So near were we that we could hear them shouting as they ran to the attack. San Marco was assaulted again and again while we were there, but the Italians, try as they

might, could not get it; they used, with great effort and sometimes terrible losses, to get half-way up, and rumours used to float down to us that they had taken it, but they were always driven back again. The top was practically impregnable, having machine-guns hidden in caves all round; and a little Bersagliere officer, who had led his men over and over again to the assault, told us that there was one point beyond which his men simply could not go, for they were mown down in rows and nothing could live. San Marco was never taken while we were there, but San Gabriele was several times, and then lost again. We had a very personal interest in the taking of San Gabriele. The road we usually took to pay our daily visit to the tunnel at Plava, or rather Zagora, was a long and a very steep one. We were both cowardly about hairpin bends and very steep gradients. There was a beautifully flat road which led from Zagora along a narrow valley to Gorizia, but unfortunately it was completely overlooked by the Austrian batteries on San Gabriele, and so long as Gabriele remained Austrian we could not go down this road. At last one day news got about that Gabriele was really taken. I murmured at the tunnel hospital that we thought we would try that road that evening, as it was so much quicker. No one made any remark, so we concluded that it was open, and off we started. We crossed the bridge to the other side of the river and slowly picked our way through the immense throng of mules, guns, and troops of all sorts, who were going up to reinforce the tired men who had just rushed Monte Kuch with such wonderful élan. At one place an officer signed to us to stop, and shouted something that we could not hear; we pulled up, but not soon enough, and a big mortar hidden just below the edge of the road went off exactly in our ears. Why we had not the drum of our ears broken I cannot imagine. I was sitting on the side of the car nearest to it, and had my hat whirled off my head, but nothing else happened. We proceeded quietly, *very* quietly, so as to make no dust, and presently came to a turn in the road. There we met two stretchers with men who had just been hit being carried back to the dressing station that we had passed some way back. The valley was getting narrower and narrower, and there were fewer and fewer people to be seen. We came to a Major of Artillery standing behind a screen, staring up the road with his glasses, so we stopped and asked him if the road was open. He saluted politely, and said, "It wasn't half an hour ago, but you might find it so now." By this time, what with the fearsomeness of the grey rocky sides descending into the rushing river and the growing and eerie silence, we were both beginning to wonder whether we should ever get home any more. Then the protective screens on each side of the road ceased, and for the

first time for many months we were on a road without any cover. We felt very lonely, and were creeping cautiously along, when there came an outburst of firing, shrapnel overhead and machine-guns along the road. You can imagine that we did not stay long! The road had bits spurting out of it not 100 yards away, and we backed the car more hurriedly than I have ever seen a car backed before. There was no time to turn nor was there room, so we had to back. We passed that Major a little way up the road. There was no need to explain, and we smiled sweetly at each other, and continued our way; but it was a pity, as the road was so much shorter and so much safer, if only it had been open. Our car chose to break down completely about ten minutes afterwards, and had to be towed home, so perhaps it was as well that we did not succeed in taking our short cut!

A few days after the flight of the Austrians over the Bainsizza Plateau, we received a message from the General asking us to go up to the new ground just taken by the Italians, and see whether the roads were possible for our apparatus. So we took our little touring Fiat up to sample the going for the heavier cars, and packed it full of gauze, swabs, and thermometers, which we knew were much needed by the advanced dressing stations. We crossed the river half-way between Plava and Canale, as the usual bridge was down, and finding ourselves so far already from our objective, we decided to go up by a new road that we heard existed near Canale. Canale must have been beautiful before it was destroyed, as it was situated on the river itself, with a series of bridges connecting both banks. There were still remains of houses to be seen on the bridges, and its position was on a lovely curve of the river, with high wooded mountains on either side.

The road proved not to be finished, so we had to return to Plava and go up by the wonderful road which the Italian engineers had made up Monte Kuch: 7½ kilometres of road with fourteen hairpin bends, and wide enough to take three lorries abreast, all made in twenty-one days! It was very crowded, and we stuck hopelessly at one of the bends; a big naval gun being towed up by two huge tractors had refused to turn the sharp corner, and had stuck right across the road. The only way to move it was for one of the tractors to climb the steep bank, towing the gun with it, and then to insert jacks under the gun, and once on the balance, to put twenty or thirty men to swing it bodily round to the new direction, with twenty others to steady its nose with a rope for fear it might possibly overbalance. We sat and watched this wonderful performance, which went off without a hitch. It took about an hour and a half, and we remained comfortably in our car and ate our luncheon.

The Bainsizza Plateau is

very wild and beautiful, with grey rocks sticking up out of the ground everywhere. There obviously had been plenty of trees, but they were the usual sad sight, all blown to bits and the bark all gone, leaving them standing white against the scorched and furrowed ground. The Austrian dug-outs looked like so many rabbit-burrows up the sides of the ravines, and there were signs of the enemy's rapid flight at every turn—ammunition-dumps, gun-carriages, and large heaps of boxes containing food; in one place we passed they had left two field-guns and all their ammunition, as well as a traction engine. They had been trying to get their guns up out of the pit where they had been hidden when the Italians had fallen upon them and captured the whole lot, turning the guns round and firing them after them.

The next time we came up on to the Plateau we found the King standing on a hillock watching the guns that the Italians had taken file past, and we stayed and watched them too; I think twenty-two passed while we were there, and the King said that many had passed before we arrived.

To return to our first visit, which was much the most interesting one. There was no shelling going on as we left the mountain to go across the Plateau, and it was so lovely that we told our Italian driver to go steady, because we wanted to have time to see the country properly. We were going first to Batë, and to reach this we had to pass a little house where the English Ambulance had established itself. On our way down we saw masses of shell-cases of all sizes and shapes, and the demon of souvenir-hunting took possession of us. We got out and picked up quantities, stowing them into the car. We then proceeded on our road, and stopped on passing the English Ambulance Section, to pass the time of day with them. We found them much worried, as it appeared that a camion had been hit not half an hour before our arrival on the very spot on which we had been so happily culling souvenirs. They had been watching us through glasses, and said the road was always being shelled, and that the Austrians could see every car that came along it. The Austrians were obviously in a kind mood the moment we chose to play by the roadside! They were kind to us all that day, because, having to go to Zabrdo, the Englishmen were good enough to say that they would take us in an ambulance car, as more likely to escape being fired at than our private one, which looked like a staff car. We had some excellent tea with them after we had finished our errands to the farther hospitals, and then we started for Zabrdo with Mr Dickenson in his ambulance, with a gigantic Red Cross flag stretching from the bonnet to the back of the car.

They cheered us by telling us that the road was in full view of the Austrian line the whole

way, but that so far they had never been personally fired on, though everybody else had! We went very fast and bumped about wildly, as the road was practically non-existent, but got there without any mishap. We found our Doctor-Major whom we had come to see, and he seemed much pleased at getting the thermometers, which he said were very difficult to obtain and were broken in quantities by the men. We were just getting up to go when a shell came over with a scream and landed plump outside the house, followed immediately by another that spattered stones and other things in through the door. The Major seemed somewhat worried, and said it was impossible for us to start, so we politely sat down again and began to make conversation; but the shells arrived faster and faster, and the Major got up saying the house was not safe and we must come into a cave a little way off. I do not know what the others felt about it, but I know I should have much preferred to stay where I was under a nice strong doorway to running out into the street at that moment; but we had to do it, and I have seldom run so fast. It was lucky that we did run, as a H.E. hit the church tower just as we all bolted down like rabbits. We were followed by a little surgeon who had been in the fields and had been caught in the storm. He was very blown and shouting with laughter at his escape. After a bit the firing died down, and we emerged from our shelter and gained the car, which had not been touched. Mrs Hollings confided to me in a whisper that she had been hit on the ankle by one of the stones which had been hurled in at the door. We did not mention it, as our companions would have been so distressed, but it made a beautiful bruise. Later on one of the big Sanitá officials heard of it, and came to try and find out if she had been wounded, but she could not say she had, much to the kind official's disappointment.

X.

In September 1916 we had a visit from a Colonel and a Major of the Staff to tell us from the General that we had been recommended for the "Medal of Valore" for the work we had done during 1916. Of course we were much pleased, and still more so when, in September 1917, quite unexpectedly, the King came and presented us with them himself. We have to thank the surgeons for their unfailing patience and help; we were, of course, only amateurs, and although all of us doing our best, we were well aware of our want of surgical knowledge and of the great gap which stands between all amateurs and professionals. Still, I think that, given perseverance, goodwill, and untiring attention to the minutest details, any one can learn to be extremely useful to

surgeons in finding and locating foreign bodies and fractures. The finding and diagnosis of disease is, of course, a totally different matter, and this no amateur ought to attempt. If we were asked to radiograph or radioscope any one for suspected disease, we always agreed to turn on the rays for the surgeon and allow him to look, but refused to have anything to do with it ourselves beyond taking plates, as we were well aware how little we knew. When first we went abroad we intended only to manage the apparatus, leaving the surgeons to do the screening; but we soon found how many people there are who can see nothing through the screen, and when they do see, have not the vaguest idea of their whereabouts in the human body.

Professor De Cigna, who had done a lot of radiography and was one of the first Italian surgeons we worked for, used to show us everything he could, normal and abnormal, explaining fractures to us and helping in every way. Dr Sbrozzi, a well-known brain surgeon, was also most helpful, so that before we had been out long we took to doing all the screening ourselves, as our eyes soon grew accustomed to seeing in the dark.

In Paris we had never screened at all, as the radiographer there was nervous of the rays and would never use the screen if he could help it. He used to say, "If the surgeons want to look, they may —I am not going to risk it."

I often wonder how many bullets he missed by only radiographing one portion of the man! We over and over again found the bullets in such unexpected places. One case we had, where the bullet had entered on the left of the groin. We looked everywhere for it; for the best part of an hour we hunted, and at last gave it up. As the man sat up to get off the stretcher, I put my hand on his left shoulder, and there, just under the skin at the back, was the bullet sticking out in a sharp lump. Every one, including the man, was much amused. The surgeon sent for his knife, painted the place with iodine, made a slight incision, and out came the bullet. I never saw any one so delighted as its owner, who had evidently been living in dread of an abdominal operation or something else equally unpleasant.

We were very sorry to have to leave, but we were recommended strongly to keep away from the rays for a bit, as our hands and eyes had become somewhat affected by them. So on the 31st September Mrs Hollings and I handed the command of our section over to Mr Pinsent, who had already been working some time in Verona, and went home. We have been asked to try and collect another X-Ray section and take it up to the Front again. This we are most willing to try and do, as we know how necessary radiography is, and what an amount of unnecessary suffering it saves.

CHANGE OF AIR.

SUMMER in the Sudan had been exceptionally hot. After a heavy year's work, interrupted by constant bouts of fever, I was glad to turn my face homewards about the beginning of August, a bodily wreck.

But Fate was unkind. I happened to arrive in England simultaneously with a heat wave, so that the pleasure of feeling cold was denied me. Then I had a stroke of luck. A friend told me of a small tramp steamer that was leaving in a few days for the Labrador coast. It sounded most enticing; the very name suggested icebergs and blizzards. I at once got into communication with the captain of the tramp, who answered that he would be glad to take me with him as a paying guest for the modest sum of 2s. 6d. a day — his ship not being licensed to carry passengers. I wired back acceptance, and, a couple of days later, arrived at Goole and embarked in the *Harmyn*. She was a neat little tramp of about 500 tons.

As this happened to be her maiden voyage, there were several passengers on board besides myself. There was a retired Master Mariner, part owner of the vessel, with a nephew—a rather dull youth of about fifteen; another retired Master Mariner, taking the trip for the good of his health—an interesting old man, who had served all his days in sailing-ships, and consequently had rather a contempt for steam; and a cousin of the owner, a marine engineer by trade, making the trip for the good of the engines. So, all told, there were five of us in the comfortable little saloon aft, in addition to the Master of the ship and the two mates. Two engineers, with their own mess amidships, a cook, a steward, eight deck hands, and three stokers completed the ship's company. My cabin was small but comfortable, and the cooking proved plain but good.

The *Harmyn* was under charter to proceed to a fishing station on the Labrador coast, with a load of salt in her forehold and coal in the after. At the fishing station she was to discharge her cargo after replenishing her bunkers from the coal, and take on board a cargo of salt cod and carry it to Spanish or Italian ports, wherever the best price happened to be available. Salt cod, under the name of Stock Fish, figures largely in the menus on Friday of good Catholics of the Mediterranean races.

Our start was unpropitious. One of the stokers developed a sore hand, the result of an old wound after his first trick below; and as his arm and hand swelled up in an alarming manner, it was decided to put him on shore at Plymouth

and obtain a substitute. This took some time, and we lay in Plymouth all night and well on into the forenoon next day, when the Master came back triumphant with an American — a man who apparently lived for the sake of grievances, but who could stoke.

At last, about three days after leaving Goole, we cleared the English Channel, and started out across the Atlantic. On the whole we were favoured with good weather, though at times what a liner would call a very moderate sea was enough to make our small packet jump about in a fairly lively manner. For the first days I was content to loaf about and suck in health, read a little, and play draughts with the invalid Master. I thought I knew something about the game until I started to play with him; but right to the end of the trip I never managed to beat him, though he tried to teach me some of his skill by pointing out the fatal mistakes I made, and showing me how I should have played instead.

With returning vigour, I demanded work, and it was suggested that I should trim coal below, from the after-hold to the bunkers. The skipper was distinctly surprised when I jumped at the proposal; and thenceforward, until the end of the voyage, I used to put in two good hours a day, clad in a suit of overalls lent by one of the engineers, shovelling coal.

There is a very strict etiquette on board ship, that master mariners, however expert they may be, must not interfere in any way, or take any part in the navigation of a ship on which they are travelling as passengers—except on Sunday. So on that day alone, both of our passenger Masters repaired to the bridge with their sextants, and there was the solemn spectacle of four experts fixing the ship's latitude: for the skipper and mate on watch were also at work with their instruments.

Sunday also provided the exception to the rule that we were a "dry" ship. After dinner a bottle of port was passed round once, and sweethearts and wives were toasted with all due solemnity.

When we were about halfway across, weather being calm, it was decided to have a speed trial. By that time the engines had been tuned up, and the patent log sufficiently tested against distance run according to observations. So the two English stokers were put on duty together, to keep a full head of steam, and for the two hours the ship's speed worked out at a fraction over 10 knots. When it was the American's turn to relieve them, he asked that the test might be continued throughout his watch. To his openly-expressed delight, and the disgust of the Englishmen, he got more speed out of the ship single-handed, and our deep-water record worked out to the figure of $10\frac{3}{4}$ knots.

When we were still 200 miles off the coast it became distinctly colder; and tests of water temperature showed that we had entered the Arctic or

East Greenland stream, that washes the Labrador coast, and brings down all the ice that causes so much trouble in the North Atlantic during the early part of summer. In the afternoon, when still over 100 miles off the coast, we sighted our first iceberg; and afterwards there were always some in sight. At 10 P.M. it was reckoned that we were within twenty miles of the group of islands for which we were making. So the ship was hove to in steamer sense—that is, we pottered up and down on a short beat, waiting for daylight. For the Labrador coast is not sufficiently frequented to be lit up like our coasts at home: so far as I know, there is not a single lighthouse throughout its length. We therefore had to make our landfall by day, and be piloted in.

At daylight we got under way again, and soon raised the land. When we were seen from the harbour, a boat put out to us; one of the men in it clambered on board, and piloted us in through a narrow rock-bound entrance into a snug harbour, where we were soon moored (a rock bottom making anchorage impossible).

And so we finished our trip across the Atlantic—the *Harmyn's* maiden effort—in ten days from Goole. Just three weeks earlier I had been grilling in the Sudan; now I found myself on the other side of the Atlantic, with icebergs in sight all around, fever and prickly heat gone, and new vigour infused into me.

While we were tying up, a shore-boat came off to us, bringing the manager of the company that owned the fishing settlement. He had been warned of my coming, and told to make my stay in the country as pleasant as possible. So now he invited me to move from the ship to his house on shore, an invitation that I gladly accepted, though it meant seeing less of my friends, the old sea-dogs. As for my future plans, they were quite unsettled, as plans on a trip of this sort ought to be. I might go on with the *Harmyn* to the Mediterranean, or go down the coast in the mail steamer that made a trip once a month during the open season, and so home *viâ* Newfoundland. But as it would take at least a fortnight to unload and reload the steamer, I had plenty of time in which to make up my mind.

I found the manager's house a comfortable wooden structure, built, like the twenty or thirty other houses on the island, to withstand the bitter winter cold that descends upon the land from November to May. There were two other prominent buildings on shore: one a hospital run by the Deep Sea Mission, with a doctor and two nurses in charge; and the other the "bunk-house," where the Company's men were housed. These men are brought up from Newfoundland in the spring to work at curing the fish, act as general labour party, and so on; and they go back home in autumn when the season's work is finished, before the ice closes down on the desolate country.

The rest of the inhabitants, or *livières* as they are called, stop there all year round, fishing in summer, and trapping during winter on the mainland, whence also they draw their year's supply of fuel, from the forests inland, across the ice with dog-teams. For nothing except a scanty grass and moss will grow on that rock-bound coast, covered with snow and ice for over half the year, and exposed to all the violence of the Atlantic gales.

The Peninsula of Labrador, bounded on the south by the Straits of Belle Isle, and on the north by James Bay, has a sparse row of settlements along its coast. The interior is uninhabited, except for a small tribe of Red Indians, who seem to give no trouble. While its coast-line has been charted by the Admiralty, its interior is practically unexplored. Wherever it has been visited, it has been found to consist of a rugged plateau, dotted all over with lakes. Near the coast, as has been said, nothing will grow; but from about twenty miles inland the country is forest-clad.

Although the peninsula is in about the same latitude as Scotland, its shores are completely ice-bound for half the year, thanks to, or rather because of, the East Greenland Stream that washes its shore. The extreme cold in winter is intensified by the violent blizzards that sweep over the country. A Deep Sea Missioner, who had stopped on the coast throughout the winter, trekking between settlements by sleigh drawn by dog-teams, told me that to be caught out in one of these blizzards, far from shelter, meant certain death. So he paid almost reverential attention to advice regarding weather indications given by men who had been long in the country, before starting for a long run between habitations. But in the latter part of August, when I arrived on the coast, the climate was not unlike that in the north of Scotland, though with rather more nip in the air at night. When, later, I went some distance inland, the climate was altogether comparable to that in middle Scotland.

Labrador is under the nominal government of Newfoundland. But where population is so thin, and there is more than enough elbow-room for all, there seems to be no crime, and there are no administrative difficulties to be overcome. The parent country, so far as I know, spends no money on the coast, and extracts none from it in the shape of taxes. Actually, the greatest power in the land, or rather along the coast, is the Deep Sea Mission, which, under the leadership of Dr Grenfell, started to do a noble work there many years ago: each member of the Mission undertaking, among his duties, those of doctor, preacher, and lawgiver.

The majority of the population is collected at a few places such as the one I arrived at, where a company has established a post for the collection and shipment of fish. But dotted along the coast there

are also independent settlers—roving spirits who came there years ago, took unto themselves Esquimaux wives from the north, and reared families. Consequently a considerable proportion of the inhabitants are half-breeds,—a sturdy race who seem to combine the animal vigour of their mothers with the higher standard of intelligence of their fathers.

In this strange country, such a thing as a shop, in the ordinary sense of the word, does not exist. The *livières* are almost entirely dependent for supplies on the companies to which they sell the furs they have trapped during the winter and their catches of fish in the summer. And they are much more dependent on outside sources of supply than an average community elsewhere. For the country yields them nothing except the meat that they can shoot or trap, the fish that they take from the sea, and the timber from the forests inland with which to build and warm their houses and cook their food. Nothing will grow on the barren ground near the coast, where they live, and consequently there is a complete absence of herbivorous, domesticated animals. Their only live stock is their teams of Huskies, or Esquimaux dogs; and these are so wild that they can scarcely be called domesticated. It is no uncommon thing to come across full-grown men, born on the coast, who have never seen a horse or cow, or eaten a hen's egg. In fact, the sight of a horse would be to them just as strange as a zebra to us. So it is literally true that the country yields them nothing except what they can take from the country's wild life, and wood in plenty wherewith to build their houses and cook their food.

In their dealings with the companies, cash seldom passes, for cash is of little practical value to them. They barter their furs and fish for the necessities of life, such as clothing, blankets, flour, ironmongery, cordage and gear for their boats, powder and shot. They can only afford luxuries, improve their houses, or go in for a better boat, when a special stroke of luck comes their way, such as a shoal of herrings entering their bay. Strong drink is practically unknown on the coast, unless spruce-beer can be called such. Coffee is the almost universal drink at every meal.

They are a simple, kindly people, living a primitive sort of existence, but very much their own masters. If they miss much, they are also immune from all the anxieties and worries that beset a more complicated mode of life.

Practically, all the cod-fishing, which is the great staple industry of the country, is done from the typical North Atlantic schooner, that was made familiar to the world by Kipling in his 'Captains Courageous.' Some of these schooners are owned by the *livières*, but the majority come up from Newfoundland for the fishing season, and go back in the autumn. In either case,

the fish are brought to the trading centres, and there sold to the companies. It used to be a joy to me to watch these schooners come into harbour, and pick up their moorings or come alongside a wharf: the men jumping to their work, in spite of heavy oil-skins and sea-boots, with apparently never a command being given. Men who ply their trade, not in land-locked estuaries, but in the broad Atlantic, and to whom a slowly or badly carried out order might mean death, naturally become exceptionally smart seamen. I am convinced that, to some small extent, our failure to win the America Cup has been due to the fact that the defending yacht has always had a crew collected from this breed of seamen, while the challenger's crew has consisted of long-shoremen without any knowledge of seamanship. And if, in the days to come, when peace again reigns, any sportsman has the ambition to recover the Cup, he will do well to find his crew from among these splendid seamen of Newfoundland and Labrador.

I spent a very pleasant week on shore at the settlement, taking part in any work that was going on: helping to unload the *Harmyn*, and then to load her; chopping wood, and so on; waxing stronger daily. On our island in the Atlantic, ten miles from the mainland, we had all the advantages of living in the clean health-laden air of the sea, with none of the discomforts of the cramped life on shipboard. One day the missionary doctor took me out in his small cutter, to introduce me to an apparently unsporting but practical method of catching cod in certain places, known as jigging. The jigger consists of a lead sinker in the form of a fish, about six inches long, with two large barbed hooks coming out of its tail, while the fishing-line is attached to its head. Having arrived at a likely place, where there were about ten fathoms of water over a bank, we lowered the sail and started operations. Under instructions, I lowered my line until the sinker reached the bottom, then drew it up clear about a couple of fathoms, and attached a toggle to the line, to give a good hard grip. Then, with my hand near the gunwale, I jerked the line up with a circular swing of the arm, and lowered slowly again, repeating the operation until a sudden dead-weight on the line during the upward swing told me that a cod, incautiously preparing to dine on the lead sinker as it flashed through the water, had been foul-hooked. Cod came fairly quickly, but with cod everywhere, living in an atmosphere of cod, we didn't keep it up very long. It was a new experience, and, once the experience had been gained, there was no point in prolonging the operation.

On the whole we fared quite sumptuously on that island. Once a month the mail steamer brought up a supply of fresh meat and vegetables. With ice

to be had for the collecting, from stranded bergs around, there was no difficulty in keeping a month's supply in store. Bread was baked daily; and, of course, the ubiquitous cod figured at most meals, but cooked in such an infinite variety of ways that it never palled. A great delicacy to which I was introduced was known as cod oysters—simply cod tongues lightly fried, which make a most delicious dish.

Smoked salmon also figured in our bill of fare, for Labrador is a great salmon country. In early summer they swarm up the rivers, where the Indians net and smoke them, and then trade them on the coast. The manager told me that one summer, when he had concluded a deal with an Indian, bartering skins for flour and other supplies, the Indian thrust down his hand inside his shirt and drew forth a smoked salmon, and presented it to him as a token of his friendship. As it is unkindly said that the *livières* have a bath only once a year, and the Indians never, it can be understood why that particular salmon was fed to the dogs.

The great tales I heard of the fishing to be had in the rivers on the mainland determined my course of action. Instead of sailing in a week's time in the *Harmyn*, I decided to wait for the mail steamer, due to pass a fortnight later, and so have time for a fishing expedition. It was too late for salmon, which would only be found far up the rivers now: in any case, not being fresh run they would not be worth killing. But the rivers were said to abound with trout, which give good enough sport for any one. And there would be the chance of getting some duck. Above all, perhaps, I was attracted by the chance of seeing another stretch of unmapped territory; and as the manager was prepared to do everything in his power to further my plans, my mind was easily made up.

The first thing to do was to arrange for some men to go with me. I was strongly recommended to engage Old George,—an Englishman who had settled on the mainland opposite about fifty years before, now a trapper by profession, and of necessity a fisherman in summer,—an amphibious expert, who was just as much at home in the bush as on the water. A messenger sent across to the mainland brought him back next day; and he at once agreed to go with me for the modest sum of two dollars a day. As the manager had offered me the use of a light double-sculling boat, I decided that our proper number should be four, so that we could row in two shifts of two each. So I asked Old George if he knew of two others of the right type to accompany us. Yes, said he, he could get hold of Bill and John, two powerful young halfbreeds, whom I would find good men. Next, which of two rivers to go up, the St Mary or the Alexis, equally accessible. So far as maps went, only their mouths were

shown on Admiralty charts. Old George decided unhesitatingly for the Alexis; he knew it for twenty miles inland, where it was still a good-sized river, distinctly larger than the St Mary. So that was settled; and finally I arranged that he should come across, two days later, bringing Bill and John; then we would start together, certain of no hitch, conveyed across to the mainland with our boat and stores in the Company's launch.

There remained the question of collecting equipment and stores. The Mission lent me a gun, rod, and tackle. A tent was not necessary; if it was fine, we could sleep under the stars, feet towards the camp fire; if it rained hard, the boat turned upside down would provide all the shelter we required. So our equipment was not complicated. Some blankets, an axe and billhook, a few cooking pots, mugs, knives, forks, and spoons, were all that were required; and these were soon collected from the Company's store. Then a small keg of molasses (the *livières* prefer it to sugar), coffee, condensed milk, salt, a few dried cod, and a chunk of salt pork to insure our meals until we became self-supporting, biscuit to save the trouble of baking bread, completed our provisions for the trip. To vary the diet we must trust to rod and gun, and the bilberries with which, according to Old George, we should probably find the country inland carpeted. Plenty of tobacco and matches were not forgotten.

Early in the morning of the day appointed, Old George arrived with the half-breeds. I liked the look of these sturdy men of medium height, with open honest faces. And they proved good workers. Their kit consisted only of one blanket each, and in addition Old George had brought a fearsome old muzzle-loader of about ten bore, with a small supply of powder, small shot, and balls. Old George and his like do not waste ammunition on doubtful shots. When they loose off, they are shooting for the pot, and will take plenty of trouble to make certain of killing.

Early in the forenoon the boat and our stores were loaded into the launch, and we set off. Before midday we had reached a point a mile or two within the mouth of the river, beyond which the skipper of the launch did not like to go, as the estuary was uncharted. So our boat was lowered into the water, stores put on board; and, followed by many expressions of good luck, we started to row into the unknown, while the launch turned back.

It was a gloriously fine day, and as we paddled up the estuary I felt that life was very good. And what a comparison with my last excursion into new country a couple of months before, with a string of camels and black servants in sweltering heat! The country at the coast was a barren waste of rock, but with every mile that we advanced inland it became more inviting. Five miles inland there was a sprinkling of stunted birch; and when, to-

wards six o'clock, Old George said that it was time to think about camping, we were rowing between woods of small trees. As the estuary was still tidal and the water too brackish to drink, we coasted close along one shore until we saw a small stream joining the parent river, when we landed and started to prepare camp. First of all a pile of wood had to be cut sufficient to keep the fire going all night. Then one of us started to boil water for the coffee and cook some cod steaks; this first night we were dependent on the food we had brought, for no duck came our way and a trolled minnow had attracted nothing. While supper was being prepared a heap of spruce twigs were collected and spread on the ground to a depth of six inches. This makes as comfortable a bed as any healthy man can want. Supper, though not an elaborate meal, had the sauce of hunger and work all day in the open to help it down. Then we sat round the fire and smoked a pipe or two, listening to Old George's trapping experiences before we rolled ourselves in our blankets and went to sleep. The stoking of the fire throughout the night was delightfully automatic—whoever felt cold first woke up and threw more wood on, then went to sleep again.

Daylight found us up the next morning. Breakfast was soon cooked and eaten; and by seven o'clock we had launched the boat, packed our stores on board, and started off. By midday we reached Old George's farthest inland — some twenty miles from the mouth of the river; and as there was a convenient stream of water here we stopped for dinner. The river, which at its mouth had been half a mile wide, had now narrowed down to a hundred yards, but the water was still brackish. Soon after we started in the afternoon, Bill spotted some duck far ahead under the river bank. Old George at once prepared for action by loading his gun with No. 5 shot; he said we wanted meat, and therefore he would shoot first, browning them on the water with his mighty weapon, and then I could fire at them as they rose. After all, it was shooting for the pot, so I raised no objection. We paddled up quietly until we were within fifty yards of them, huddled under the bank, when Old George loosed off, knocking over three; and as I downed one when they rose, we had a duck apiece to feast on.

All afternoon the river narrowed steadily, and when it was time to make camp in the evening it was only thirty yards wide. At a pinch its water could have been used, though still slightly brackish. But a kindly streamlet appeared just at the right time, so we made camp alongside it. According to my reckoning we were now thirty miles up the river. While collecting wood I came upon my first mass of bilberries; but it was too late to think of gathering enough for a stew, so I contented myself with

eating a few handfuls. Even at this short distance inland we seemed to have got away from the Atlantic influence, for the trees were fairly well grown. Again it was a fine night. After feasting royally on the duck, with legs saved for breakfast, we turned in and were soon asleep.

Up and under way again at seven o'clock, we struck our first trouble about an hour after our start: shoals and sandbanks, through which we had difficulty in finding a way. At times we all had to step overboard into the water, ankle deep, and half lift the boat over shallows. While we were in the middle of this sandy wilderness, which no doubt constituted the true river bar, it started to rain, — luck in weather could not last for ever. Midday found us still struggling in the shallows; so we only halted long enough, sitting in the boat, to eat some biscuit and cold pork, and dip a mug over the side for a drink, for all trace of salt had now left the water: we were in the river proper. At last we won through to open water, and made good progress until evening, when we camped in a snug little clearing. While the others were preparing camp I tried my luck with the rod, and soon got half a dozen nice trout. And from this point onwards the fishing was as good as any man could desire. As there was every appearance of more rain to follow during the night, we carried the boat up to our camp fire, and, turning it upside down on a prepared cradle of logs, had a dry though somewhat cramped home to sleep in. As for wet feet and clothing, we did not trouble about that; it seems to have no effect on one when sleeping in the open, provided it is not too cold.

We started off about the usual time next morning. Clouds had cleared off during the night, and the day was gloriously fine and, later, quite warm. Whether the rain of the previous day, or the warm sunshine, was responsible, I do not know, but we were infested by swarms of mosquitoes and sand-flies for the first time. They seemed a regular plague to me; but Old George, with the licence of the "oldest inhabitant," said that this was nothing to the torment that one had to endure earlier in the year, any distance in from the coast, and particularly in June, when the air was thick with dog-flies that bit you, deer-flies that stung you, and the minor pests that we were now enduring. If all that he said was true—and his information always proved very correct—I should not advise any one to go to Labrador in June just for the sake of the salmon-fishing.

We had a good open stretch of water all that day, the river occasionally opening out into miniature lakes, and we pushed ahead well. Again Old George was successful in bagging some duck that he stalked on foot through the wood; and at the

midday halt, in spite of mosquitoes, I caught a dozen trout, so that we were plentifully supplied with food. According to my reckoning, we were now fifty-five miles inland.

There is one decent trait about the mosquitoes and sandflies of Labrador: they knock off work at sunset, and leave one quite undisturbed at night, unlike their relatives of tropical countries. On the whole, it is better to be worried by day when one is up and about, doing something, than at night.

Up to this point the river had been flowing through comparatively flat country, amidst almost continuous woods of pine since we passed the coastal limit of tree growth. But we had not got far beyond Fifty-five-mile Camp when the character of the country and of the river began to change. The country became more broken, with hills standing up here and there; and the course of the river became steeper and obstructed by miniature rapids, or rattles as Old George called them, and progress became slow. Some of the rattles we negotiated by wading and lifting the boat over; but at others there was nothing for it but to portage through the forest—in places using the axe to clear a way. It was hard work, and as the result of a long day's toil I reckoned we had only progressed five miles when, in open water again, we camped for the night. But we had one great stroke of luck to cheer us up. When we were halted at midday, in the middle of a portage, a seal crawled out of the water, on to some rocks below, to sun itself. I was surprised to see one so far up-stream, and in this instance Old George's local knowledge was lacking: he could not say if it was usual or not. But he decided to bag it; so, loading that wonderful old gun of his with ball, he made a circle through the wood until opposite the seal and had an easy shot. The speed with which he then scrambled along the river bank, to intercept the body at the next rattle, was very creditable for a man of seventy, as he said he was. Bill, who had run down to his assistance, carried it back. It was soon skinned and cut up into joints, which were then tied to a rope and trailed in the water. Twelve hours' soaking, Old George said, to wash out the fishy flavour, would make it as tasty as bear steak. I never sampled bear steak, but there was no question about the tastiness of that seal meat; we dined next day on seal steak, and for several days it figured at every meal in one form or another, and proved most excellent.

Throughout this day of hard work it had rained at intervals, and during the evening heavy rain fell continuously. I thought that Old George's woodcraft would be severely tested in getting a fire lit, but to him it was simple. First he collected a pile of wood of all sizes, ranging from billets six inches in diameter to mere twigs.

Then he cut a long strip of bark off a well-grown birch, and pulled off the inner fibre. This, being very resinous, gave a strong flame, by which he got his twigs to burn; these lit larger sticks, and so on, until finally we had a roaring fire of logs to warm us in our soaking clothes.

We had named our camps, as we came up the river, by the mileage that I reckoned we had travelled from the coast. So this camp, after our struggle through the rattles, was called Sixty-mile Camp. As it turned out, it was our last camp up the river, and we renamed it Base Camp.

The next morning was brilliantly fine—it seemed to be very nearly the rule that wet and fine days alternated—and we pushed off full of hope of making good progress. But hope died out when, on rounding a bend, we came to another rattle, not very difficult but a good half mile long, over which we tracked the boat with difficulty. Midday found us a very short distance above Sixty-mile Camp, with more bad water ahead. So we held a council of war, and decided to leave the boat where it was, carry our possessions back to Sixty-mile Camp as a Base, and the next day explore well ahead on foot.

As we got back to camp fairly early in the afternoon, Bill and John set to work to build a wigwam, while Old George went off with his gun in search of duck, and I fished. In a remarkably short time the half-breeds had built a very creditable structure, in the shape of a candle-extinguisher, about ten feet in diameter, well thatched with birch branches. It proved quite a comfortable sleeping-house for the nights we spent at Base Camp, and was nearly rain-tight.

My fishing was fast and furious, and I only stopped when I had caught so many trout that to continue would have been senseless slaughter. Having still plenty of time before sunset, I next set to work to collect bilberries, and with them concocted a novel dish, the recipe for which would run as follows: To stewed bilberries add about 25 per cent of molasses, and roof over with toasted biscuit; serve hot or cold. It was at once named Wigwam Tart, voted a complete success, and figured at most of our meals in future, whenever one of us had enough time to collect the berries.

The next day we started early from Base Camp, carrying sandwiches of biscuit and seal meat, and tramped up the river. The going was slow over the rough ground at the side of the river, or in its bed. After three hours' tramp, in which time we covered no more than six miles, it became evident that the river was no longer of any use as a help for transport, as it consisted of one continuous series of rattles. So we turned back. On the way, Old George suddenly pointed to nothing in particular on the ground, and said, "Black bear; it will be worth while to follow it for a bit;" so we struck off along its track. Un-

like native trackers, he could explain what he saw and the deductions that he drew from the signs, so that I had an interesting little lesson in tracking under conditions totally dissimilar to those I had been accustomed to. After following the track for about a mile, Old George said it was no good going farther: the bear was a traveller, and there was no saying how far it might go before it stopped. So we gave it up.

On our way to Base Camp we picked up the boat, that had been left the day before, and took it back with us. Thus ended our journey inland.

The following day, to get a general view of the country, I climbed a hill about 500 feet high that lay a mile or two from camp. As it was a gloriously clear day, I was able to see a wonderful expanse of country: looking backwards, the undulating wooded country through which we had passed, with the river only visible where it widened out into lakes; ahead, more broken country, with ridges and swells typical of foothills, the river occasionally appearing as a silver streak as it wound away westward until lost to view in the virgin forest, where, almost certainly, none but Red Indians had set foot; then, after forest merged into background, a faint blue line in the distance —the "height of land," or plateau, of which I had heard so much. With luck favouring greatly, I might have set foot upon it: at any rate I had seen it. It was some small consolation to realise that it was still so far away, that there was no temptation to make an effort to reach it in the time at my disposal.

We spent a couple of days at Base Camp, fishing and shooting, leading a healthy outdoor life with great content. The trout were as good to eat as they were to catch; duck occasionally came our way; and there was always wigwam tart. But we never saw another seal.

We packed our traps into the boat and left Base Camp with much regret, five days before the date on which I had arranged that the launch should come to the mouth of the river to pick us up; with five days in which to come down the river, we were able to take it comfortably easy; particularly as the acquaintance that we had made with the river on the way up saved us much of the searching for channels that had taken so much time, and the clearing of portage tracks was so much to the good.

During our last days at Base Camp, and for the whole run down-stream, we were favoured with exceptionally fine weather. No rain fell, and in the sun, during the day, it was pleasantly warm. There was a distinct autumnal nip in the air at night; but that only made sleep in the open air all the more invigorating. Naturally we made use of the camps we had formed on the way up the river.

On the afternoon of the fifth day after leaving Base Camp

we reached the coast. As sleeping in the open, on bare rocky ground, had no attractions, and the temperature was distinctly lower close to the sea, we asked for and obtained house-room from a settler who lived there. There, rolled up in our blankets, we slept well enough on the floor, though it seemed strange at first to be within four walls after a fortnight in the open. We handed over the remainder of our stores, including some trout, to the owner of the house, who feasted us royally on fresh bread (his wife's baking), cod, and pork, helped out by our contributions. When, next morning, I wanted to pay him something for putting us up, he wouldn't hear of it: we were his guests, and there was nothing more to be said about it.

In the morning, when the launch appeared in sight, I paid their wages to Old George, Bill, and John, so that they could go straight home down the coast, if they liked. But all three elected to cross with me in the launch, and spend their money at the Company's store, in buying various things that would be useful to them during the coming winter. Well, indeed, had they earned their pay; never before or since, during wanderings in the wilds, have I had a more cheery, handy, or willing trio to travel with.

A hail brought the launch in to the settler's wharf; we said good-bye to him, and an uneventful run took us back to the comparative civilisation of the Company's settlement.

The mail steamer was due next day, but I was not fated to go up the coast in her after all. In the afternoon a trail of smoke to the south indicated the approach of a steamer, and a boat was sent out to meet her and pilot her in, in case she wanted to call. When presently, with pilot on board, she rounded the headland and entered the harbour, all interest was centred on her: for the arrival of a steamer without previous warning was an event. Why was she calling? what was her destination? and—why was she so deep in the water? The manager at once put off to her; and I, as a privileged guest with nothing to do, went with him. She was a small Norwegian tramp, of about 300 tons, bound down the coast for a cargo of fish. The previous afternoon, the carpenter, when sounding the wells, had found a lot of water in her. The bilge-pump had not been able to make any impression on it, nor could the hand-pumps do more than prevent it increasing fast. They had been able to prove that the leak was in the after-hold, which was full of coal; and thereafter the crew had not had a wink of sleep, some working at the pumps, while others laboured at digging out the coal and piling it on deck to get at the leak. But they had not yet succeeded, and were about played out, and saw no prospect of reaching their destination

farther north. Therefore they had put in to the nearest harbour shown on the chart for help. The manager at once gave orders for two schooners lying alongside the wharf to be moved out; and as soon as she was berthed in their place, a strong crew of Company's men was put on board to clear that hold. Being at a loose end, I worked with them. Towards midnight the coal had been far enough removed to disclose the leak — a jagged tear of about a square inch, right in the bottom plating, through which the water was spouting hard. At once a wooden plug, roughly whittled to the shape of the tear, was driven into it, and what had been a fountain of water was reduced to a trickle. The bilge-pump, by morning, had dried the ship.

There remained a decision about what the tramp should now do. Sea law apparently decrees that, in a case of this sort, a commission of three master mariners can decide whether a ship is seaworthy or not. So it was settled to wait until the mail steamer arrived, when her captain, with the captain of the tramp, and the owner of a schooner who held a master's certificate, could pronounce a verdict. When the mail steamer arrived, it was her captain who quite took charge of the proceedings; said that the place where the leak was should be boxed off with iron plates, the box filled in with concrete, and steel wedges driven between the plates forming the box and the ship's ribs. With these patchwork repairs carried out, she would be seaworthy enough to do the voyage up the coast to Newfoundland, where she could be dry-docked; but not seaworthy enough to cross the Atlantic. This decision, then, was written out at length and all the members of the commission signed it. Now as the tramp was bound for repairs to the same destination as the mail steamer, I asked her skipper if he could take me with him as a passenger, and he at once agreed. Then, as I was not leaving by the mail steamer, and happened to be a qualified civil engineer, I was appointed to see that the patchwork was well and truly built. This was only a matter of a few hours' work, with the help of the Company's blacksmith. To complete the formalities, I was asked to give a certificate that the repairs had been carried out in a workmanlike manner; and was presented, also as a formality, with a fee of ten dollars, for which I gave a receipt, to be duly filed with the rest of the documents. I presented this regal fee to the Deep Sea Missioner, who looked upon it as a most munificent and unexpected donation.

A few hours after the mail steamer left, the tramp was ready for sea again, and her coal was loaded back on board. I said good-bye to the manager and the others that I had got to know so well, and, truly sorry to leave that happy community, put to sea in the little tramp.

We had a comfortable run of two days up the coast to St John's, where the tramp was at once dry-docked, and a patch riveted over the tear. How it had happened remained a mystery. But she was quickly made fit for sea again, and set off down the coast, to pick up her cargo of fish for the voracious Mediterranean market.

I had hoped to find some unconventional means of returning from Newfoundland to England, in tramp or sailing-vessel; but nothing was immediately available, and I could not wait indefinitely. So, finally, I was compelled to take passage in an Allan Liner, and finished my round trip in prosaic fashion. One trip in a liner is very like another. We had reasonably good weather for the time of year, reasonably good food, and there was a sufficiency of good company on board. So the seven days that it took us to reach the Clyde passed pleasantly enough. We reached the Mull of Cantyre about midday, but all hope of having a good view of the Firth was blotted out with the landscape by thick fog, through which we had to grope our way. It was past midnight before we dropped anchor at the Tail of the Bank; and there she had to lie for the rest of the night, for the fog that had been thick in the Firth was a solid wall up the river, and the pilot declared that it was impossible to take a liner up under such conditions. So I left the ship in the early morning at Greenock, and my seven weeks' trip was over. I had gone in search of health, and I had found it. There was no need to weigh myself to prove it; but out of curiosity I did so, and found that during those seven weeks I had put on 35 good pounds.

Labrador is not so inaccessible as it sounds. To those who desire good fishing, and are prepared to put up with, or even enjoy, rough life in the open, I can unreservedly recommend such a trip as I made. The country has a rugged charm of its own, from its rock-bound, ice-studded coast to that "height of land" that I saw but did not reach; its air has the magic of health in it; and all who live on the coast, from the humblest fisherman to the lords of creation in the shape of company managers and Deep Sea Missioners, extend the hand of welcome to the stranger who so rarely enters within their gates.

"NOT UNDER FULL ADMINISTRATIVE CONTROL."

THAT some denizens of the Empire take less kindly to British rule than others is an understood thing; and the great British Public is dimly aware that there are localities in which the inhabitants not infrequently signify their disapproval by shooting guns or poisoned arrows at the officers who are sent to administer government. This story happened some years ago in a district of which not one in ten thousand has ever heard; consequently its name is of no interest. It lies alongside one of the great rivers of the world, and is not very far from one of the principal government stations in that particular Protectorate. The inhabitants were most unpleasant people. They preferred human meat to any other dish—white, if possible. They did no work, paid no tribute, and spent most of their time and energy in stalking the Political Officer.

Several good men and true had fallen victims to their cunning; but at the moment they were being governed by an officer who had not only contrived to win their respect, but had managed to survive several years among them. This, however, did not prevent their amiable efforts to cause his demise; though, from the fact that they had dubbed him "The White Father," the attempts on his life were only made by the least regenerate of this collection of "bad hats." Into their midst had recently come a second Political Officer, a keen and energetic assistant named Phipps. Him they neither feared nor honoured, so that his movements were dogged with patient regularity, and he had already escaped by the skin of his teeth more than once. In honour to him let it be said that his energies were deterred not one jot, for by such men is the British Empire served.

It so happened that towards the end of the dry weather Phipps had reason to visit one of the least openly hostile portions of the district to inquire into various malpractices, and, if possible, to collect some long-owing tribute. Lulled, perhaps, by a sense of false security (there had been no open attempt to murder him for nearly five weeks), he was only accompanied by an escort of seven native policemen; and with this little band he sallied forth on his country's business.

For several days all went well. The people were surprisingly amenable to law and order, and he was beginning to fancy that their evil character had been somewhat exaggerated. Travelling leisurely from village to village, he had nearly reached the end of his journey, and had collected quite a large amount of tribute, when word reached him that there had been a particularly ugly murder

in one of the villages that he had already visited. Being in the neighbourhood, he decided to return at once and endeavour to bring the offenders to book; so he gave the order to break up his camp and to turn back.

A tiring march brought him at sundown to the site of his camp that morning, and there his tent was pitched. He was but six miles from his destination, so a message was sent to the headman, ordering him to report himself the following morning. Having seen the messenger depart for Gidan Sama—for that was the name of the village—he superintended the grooming and feeding of his pony, then bathed and dined, and after smoking a contemplative pipe, retired to bed.

Next morning he arose betimes, and having breakfasted, busied himself with correspondence while awaiting the headman. As that worthy had not cast up by eight o'clock, he decided to seek him in his lair; so leaving his camp in charge of three armed constables, he rode slowly towards Gidan Sama, accompanied by the remainder of his police and his interpreter. He took his revolver, some sandwiches and a flask in his haversack, and at the last moment slipped a box of fifty cartridges in as well. How he was to bless that precaution shortly, he was naturally not to know at the time.

The country was undulating and covered with spear-grass, which at that time of year was not very high. Numerous large boulders were dotted about, and here and there sad-looking trees struggled for existence. The path was narrow and winding, so that the party had to walk in single file. Of shade there was none, and as the heat was increasing every moment progress was slow.

After a couple of hours of unpleasant going, Phipps called a halt on the top of a hill from which he could see Gidan Sama lying a mile or so below him in the valley. Slipping off his pony he got out his field-glasses and scanned the village, which struck him as being completely deserted. No living creature could be seen, and no smoke was issuing from the houses. Such behaviour, coupled with the non-appearance of the headman, aroused his suspicion; so after a short rest he and his escort started slowly down the hill. Not a soul was to be seen anywhere; the country lay quiet and sweltering under a cloudless sky. When within half a mile from the village one constable ran on ahead to spy out the land, but met Phipps at the entrance to the village with the same tale.

A slight movement in the grass behind him attracted the man's attention, and he pointed excitedly. Next moment he collapsed, transfixed by several arrows. Phipps lugged out his revolver, but his pony suddenly plunged and upset him; then struggling to its feet again galloped away with an arrow sticking out of its chest. The fall undoubtedly saved its rider's life, for a dane-gun was fired from the scrub just as he

fell, its miscellaneous charge of old nails and pot-legs whistling harmlessly over his head. Picking himself up, he called to his escort to make a dash for the nearest house, which they reached in safety, dragging with them their wounded comrade, and accompanied by a perfect hailstorm of arrows. Hastily barricading the door against their enemies, they took stock of their surroundings.

Their plight was certainly desperate: four men against an unknown number of bloodthirsty cannibals. Tom, the interpreter, had not appeared, but none had any doubt of his fate.

They had but four carbines and a revolver with which to defend themselves, and a very scanty stock of cartridges. The house was of mud, with a thatched roof; the walls were fortunately thick, but were pierced by three small windows, from which, however, they could command all the approaches. Taking the carbine from the stricken man, Phipps placed two constables at the largest window, which was of sufficient size to admit a man's body, while he and the remaining policeman each guarded one of the small windows, determined to sell their lives dearly.

The wounded constable began to suffer the most excruciating paroxysms as the poison from the arrows took effect, and finally expired in awful agony. Arrows were striking the walls, and one or two found their way through the windows, but without doing any damage. Each man fired two shots in the supposed direction of the enemy, who had remained completely invisible in the grass; but they dared not fire more than that, as ammunition was very precious. At this moment Tom scrambled in through the large window unhurt, and said that he had seen no one, but could hear sounds that indicated a very large number of pagans.

"Do you think you could get through to Lungwana?" eagerly asked Phipps.

"I can try, sir," was the reply.

Hastily the Englishman scribbled a note to the Superintendent of Police at Lungwana (the capital of the province), begging him to come to his aid with all speed; then wishing the native good luck, sent him through the window on his hazardous journey. Assuming that he got safely away —which he did not dare to hope—no relief could possibly reach them for at least twelve hours at the very earliest, so they prepared for a long stern fight.

Encouraged by their silence, the pagans, after a perfect shower of arrows, commenced to shout taunts calculated to drive the Mohammedan constables mad with rage; they bade them come out and be slaughtered like pigs, and described exactly what their fate would be. A few, bolder than the rest, made a rush to try and break in the door, but were brought down by the fire of the defenders. This sobered them for a while, and they

remained hidden, firing their arrows from time to time; but evidently hoping that their victims, maddened by lack of food and water, would sooner or later try to rush out of their sanctuary.

Four hours later a chance arrow killed another policeman, fortunately almost instantaneously. An hour after that piercing yells from without told them that the camp had been sacked, and three bleeding heads hurled into the open proclaimed the fate of its guardians. Towards evening several further attempts to rush the house were beaten back, the defenders' rifles levying a good toll upon their foes; but eventually that which they had anticipated and dreaded happened, and a flight of blazing arrows lodged in the roof, setting fire to the thatch, which began to burn furiously. The end was perilously near now.

II.

Twenty miles away, at Lungwana, it had been a hot day — one of many; but with evening came a fresh life-bringing breeze that blew up the river. Dusk was falling rapidly as two Englishmen were walking home across the golf links, at peace with the whole world. As they reached the first of the bungalows, Warrington — the Commissioner—took his friend by the arm and invited him to have a drink before going on to a Bridge party. The other assented, and they passed together into a surprisingly pretty garden where chairs had been placed in front of the house. Both paused to put on their coats, for the evenings are apt to be chilly after the intense heat of the day, then sat down while Warrington's boy handed whisky-and-soda.

Conversation flowed slowly in easy channels. Home, Bridge, golf, a new pony—all the subjects, in fact, that come most naturally to hard-worked officials at the end of the day. After a while Hughes got up to go to his Bridge, and Warrington walked with him down the path. At the gate they met a native sergeant of police and a ragged blood-stained creature in a faded khaki shirt and trousers. The sergeant saluted as the Englishmen approached, and waited.

"Hallo!" exclaimed Warrington, "I seem to know that ape. Where the deuce did I see him last?"

"Well, sergeant?" asked Hughes.

"This man bring book for you, sir."

Hughes took the message and turned back towards the chairs, where a lamp was burning; Warrington signed to the natives to follow, and accompanied him.

"Good God!" gasped Hughes, when he had read the note. "Look at that!"

Warrington read it, sat down, and looked very grave.

"Where did you leave Mr Phipps?" he asked.

Tom—for it was he—drew near and told his tale. He had managed to escape from the village, and had travelled as fast as he could to the river; but there he had been delayed for some time before he could find a canoe to take him across. It was nearly eight hours since he had left Gidan Sama.

"I must go at once, Warrington," said Hughes. "Sergeant, double down to barracks; turn out all the men not on duty. Parade at once in marching order; tell the Sergeant-Major to issue a hundred rounds a man. Quickly, now! Where's Mr Watson?"

"His boy says he has gone to the bank, sir."

"Send for him one time, then!"

"Can I do anything?" asked Warrington; then turning to Tom, who was plainly at his last gasp, said, "Here, my lad, you go to barracks and sleep. Come to me in the morning."

"Yes," said Hughes; "find Watson if you can, and tell him to hurry. Then will you ask the 'Commodore' to tell the *Dorothy* to take us across at once. She ought to have steam up still, as she only arrived this afternoon. See you on the wharf!" he added as he ran towards his bungalow.

With marvellous rapidity Hughes, who was an old campaigner, changed out of flannels into his uniform, and jumping on his pony, cantered down to barracks, followed by his cook, who had hastily put some food into a haversack. At the barracks he found Inspector Watson changing for dear life, while the police were rapidly assembling and getting ready. In less than an hour from the time the news was received, a force, consisting of two officers and sixty constables, fully equipped and provisioned, had doubled down to the wharf, and were impatiently awaiting orders to embark on the big stern-wheeler *Dorothy*. The Commissioner and the "Commodore"—as the senior officer of the Protectorate Maritime Service was nicknamed—were waiting for them, while the white engineer and his native crew were getting ready to convey them across the river as quickly as they could.

"Well done, Hughes!" exclaimed Warrington. "You have been quick! Pray God Phipps is still holding out!"

"'Commodore,'" gasped Hughes breathlessly, "will you tell them to take us about five miles down-stream to that market on the other side. That will only give us twelve miles to do."

"Right-oh, my lad. I'll take you there myself. All ready, Quartermaster?"

"All ready, sir!" shouted a voice from the sun-deck of the steamer.

"On you go then, Hughes!" and at the word the police clambered aboard. "Got your ponies with you?"

"Yes, they're in the steel canoe alongside."

"Right! Come along then," cried the "Commodore." "Cast off there!" and amid the cheers of a small excited crowd that had assembled to see them off, they started down-stream at a pace that made the steamer rock and quiver from stem to stern.

"Now, my lads," said the sailor, "you go and tuck in! My steward has got some food for you," and thanking him for his forethought, they gratefully complied.

Almost before the *Dorothy* had come to a standstill alongside a small village, the policemen were scrambling ashore and lining up on the beach. The ponies were landed, and with three valedictory toots from the syren to wish them God-speed, they started on their twelve-mile march. The road was narrow but good, and the rising moon made matters easier, so that they had nine miles to their credit by midnight. Resuming their march after a halt of ten minutes, they approached Gidan Sama with greater caution, only to find it empty. Fearing the worst, they searched the village, and quickly found the burnt-out hut. Three blackened corpses that were identified as having been constables lay among the *débris*, while outside thirty or so silent forms showed that the defenders had not died easily.

"My God, they have made a fight of it!" exclaimed Watson. "I wonder where the other bodies are. You say there were five of them altogether?"

"Let's hope Phipps wasn't taken alive," answered the Superintendent. "God help him if he was!"

Nothing further could be done until morning, so the force rested, a few scouts searching for any clue that would show them the whereabouts of the natives. Presently the body of the fourth constable was carried in, an arrow sticking out between his shoulders: he had been found half a mile from the village in the grass.

"That's four," said Hughes. "I wonder where Phipps can have got to; he evidently tried to get away."

Morning brought no further evidence; so, heavy hearted, Captain Hughes decided to make for the district headquarters, twenty-five miles away, and consult the senior Political Officer. After that, no doubt, arrangements would be made for suitably avenging Phipps's death.

Starting at daybreak they made a rapid march, and were met by the surprised Deputy Commissioner, who had heard nothing of his subordinate's plight. The remainder of the day was spent in resting and concocting plans for their future movements, and at evening news came that the pagans had taken to the hills above Gidan Baro.

III.

Three evenings later a weary trio were stitting under the flagstaff at Jaki, the headquarters of this delectable land, while over their heads the Union Jack flapped languidly in the faint breeze. The day had been appallingly hot, and many and various things had happened since the news of the pagans' whereabouts had been received.

Said Saunders, the Deputy Commissioner, to the others—

"By rights that flag should be at half mast, but I don't like to put it there."

"No more do I," said the Doctor. "Somehow, I fancy Phipps is still alive."

"I don't," answered Hughes. "We would have heard something of him by now. Anyhow, we've avenged him."

"By Jove, we have!" agreed the others.

The tale of that revenge is another story; but let it suffice to say that the pagans had been shown the error of their ways with extreme thoroughness. The police had encountered them in their lair, had surrounded them, and had very properly wiped almost all of them out of existence. Inspector Watson with twenty constables was picking up the pieces and bringing in the prisoners; and the others had returned to headquarters sick at heart at the death of Phipps, but otherwise well pleased at the manner in which his murderers had been dealt with. The strange feature of the whole affair was that while admitting—almost gleefully—the slaughter of the seven police, the prisoners with one accord swore that the white man had escaped alive. Nevertheless, it was only the Doctor, who was the latest arrival from home, who cherished even the faintest hope that this might be true.

As the sun gradually began to dip, drinks were brought out and pipes lit; while the massacre of Gidan Sama and its sequel were discussed from every point of view. At length even the Doctor was compelled to admit that the chances of Phipps having escaped were few and far between. Saunders got up to refill his glass, but set it down again with a bang.

"I say, you fellows," he cried, "look at those horsemen! There is something damned funny about them!"

A little group of white-clad horsemen was visible a mile away across the plain, which lay below the hill on which the station was built. They were riding slowly—three very close together, and others in pairs at an interval all round, almost like an escort.

"They are holding some one in the middle there. Boy, bring my glasses!"

"By Jove!" he added, as he focussed his glasses on the group, "it's a white man! It's——"

"White man come! Phipps come! Phipps come!!"

screamed an excited policeman, rushing up.

"Gad, it is!" shouted Saunders. "Boy, pony—quick!"

The Doctor rushed to his house for brandy and bandages, shouting meanwhile for his pony, while from the police lines yells arose on all sides. Saunders remained glued to the spot, glasses to his eyes.

"Hughes, I believe he's alive! Have a look."

"Yes . . ." agreed Hughes dubiously; "that's never a deader! Here come the ponies."

The trio mounted and galloped down the hill hell-for-leather, while behind them panted a dozen excited constables on foot. The leading horsemen seeing them spurred forwards, shouting that the white man lived!

"Tally-ho!" screamed the Doctor, racing to be first up.

As they came nearer, they saw Phipps seated on the centre horse, supported on either side by a white-clad native. He had lost his helmet, but had bound up his head with a turban which protected him from the sun. He was certainly alive, but obviously weak, for he waved his hand feebly to them in greeting.

"Thank God you're alive, old chap!" shouted Saunders, shaking him warmly by the hand. "We all thought those infernal pagans had got you."

"How are you, old man?" yelled Hughes. "Are you hurt?"

"No," replied Phipps, smiling weakly; "only damned tired."

"Now clear out you two!" gasped the panting Doctor, who had arrived a bad third. "This is my palaver! Drink this, Phipps," he added, forcing some brandy between his teeth. "Feel better?"

Tenderly they brought him to the station, where the Doctor examined him and reported him none the worse, but quite worn out. His succourers came in for a magnificent reception from the police (whom they more usually met only on the strictest professional terms), second only to that accorded to Phipps himself; and there were few prouder men in the Protectorate than those dusky scallywags. To the Sheikh who had brought him in Saunders spoke in the vernacular—

"Oh, Muri Baku, thou hast indeed done well. Thy deeds will be written to the Government, so that they may suitably reward thee." To which the venerable scoundrel replied—

"Oh, Master, thou art our White Father, and it behoveth us to succour thee and thy friends. Let there be no talk of reward, though perchance some of the past may be forgotten. Rest assured that I and my people reverence the Great White Race, and will never err again!"

"Damned eyewash!" remarked Saunders to Hughes. "If your slops hadn't been on the war-path, he'd have outed Phipps sure as eggs are eggs!"

Later in the evening Phipps had recovered sufficiently to tell the story of his adventures, which were, briefly, as follows:—

When the hut started burning, they opened a very rapid fire on the pagans; but when the third constable was hit, he decided that it was time to go. He and the other constable clambered out, and escaping through the smoke lay hidden in another hut until it was quite dark. Then they took to the grass to try to reach Lungwana, but were discovered, and the policeman was killed. Phipps emptied his revolver into his pursuers and took to his heels, but losing his way got completely bushed. After three days wandering about, he eventually came to the village belonging to Muri Baku. Then, thinking that the game was up, he walked boldly in and confronted the Sheikh, assuring him that he was quite prepared to be killed, but that the Sheikh would die first in a very unpleasant manner at his own hands: a revolver pointed at that gentleman's chest backed up his argument. What was his surprise when the Sheikh assured him that he was a friend of the Government, and after giving him food, produced a bed, and said that he would escort him to Jaki personally in the morning. Fearing treachery, Phipps hardly slept a wink, and in the morning started off with the Sheikh. The long ride, after his three days' exposure, proved too much for him, and he fainted several times. But the Sheikh treated him with the greatest kindness, and eventually supported him in his arms for the last stage of the journey.

M. H. M.

THE MAN FROM THE CLOUDS.

BY J. STORER CLOUSTON.

PART I.

XI. A NEAR THING.

BEING an optimist has compensations. Indeed, it would need to have, for no virtue has ever landed any one in more damnable scrapes than optimism has landed me. But before the crash comes it does help to keep one happy.

Next morning, after that nasty night, I was singing in my bath and full of wild hopes; the fact being that a new and consoling way of looking at things had suggested itself in the very act of shaving.

"They are afraid of me!" I said to myself.

After a night's sleep the adventure by the shore had grown perhaps a little blurred in some of its details. I wished I could see that curved thing rising against the night sky a trifle more distinctly in my mind's eye, so that I could take my oath in court it was a weapon. Still, I remained perfectly assured I had been attacked, and the sustaining conclusions I now drew were, firstly, that "they" (whoever they were; and I tried to keep an open mind on that point) were so afraid of me that they were ready to stick at nothing to lay me out; secondly, that they were afraid to tackle me by day, but had to choose a dark night and a lonely place; and thirdly, that with such a splendid chance it must have been nerves that made them bungle it.

"People in that state of mind will do something or other to give themselves away," I thought hopefully.

In this confident state of mind I came down for breakfast. My host, I found, was staying in bed after his night's vigil, and my hostess was daintier and more inaccessible than ever. After breakfast I reflected for a little over a pipe, and then I asked her for a bit of lunch to put in my pocket, and told her I was going for a long walk. She got the lunch and gave it me without wasting a superfluous word, and off I set.

It was a breezy morning with a lot of thin cloud in the sky, and a ruffled sea; cool and stimulating; the very day for a walk. I followed the exact route we took the night before, trying to identify such landmarks as rises and falls in the ground, and sharp curves in the shore and farms close to the coast; but I found it was practically impossible—every feature seemed so utterly altered in daylight. My object was to find the spot where I had been attacked, and at last

I had to be content with knowing that it must have been one of three or four places where the feature of a low cliff immediately under the turf was to be seen.

At one such place there was a long stretch of wall following the shore-line, which could have given shelter for any one to stalk me practically from the start. At another I noticed a farm close by, and from this an assailant could easily have slipped down to the beach and run back again. At a third the configuration of the rocks was such that it would have been simple for him to have waited below the bank till he heard us coming, made a noise to bring me down, and then gone up above without exposing himself against the sky. In fact, one could draw no definite conclusions at all.

Besides, there was the very distasteful alternative (and the more plausible it seemed the more distasteful it grew) that there might well have been two people in it; one—who might have followed me, the stone-thrower; and the other—who might, for instance, have been patrolling the shore from the opposite direction, the attacker.

Suspicious as I had felt at the moment, I shrank from this alternative, and in justification I asked myself—

"Why didn't she use her pistol, and be done with it?"

But, on the other hand, it was a most extraordinary coincidence that her father should have passed that spot certainly within three or four minutes previously, and that he should have seen no sign of my enemy. So far as I could remember the length of time I had spent groping among the rocks, it was just possible for Mr Rendall to pass by and for the other man then to begin his work of decoying me, but certainly it was an unpleasant coincidence.

And finally there was a last alternative: that I might have been mistaken in thinking I was actually assailed, and instead of that—— But what other conceivable explanation could there be? I tried hard, but could think of none.

With the flame of optimism burning now somewhat low, I kept on following the shore till I was well past the scenes of both my night adventures, and had come to the little sandy bay with the huddle of low grey farm buildings just clear of the tide. I found Peter, senior, painting his boat on the shore, and hailed him cheerfully with the same old guttural accent.

"Painting your boat, I see," said I.

He gave me a long look and one word.

"Aye," said he, and went on painting.

It struck me at once that he was even more wary and more reticent than before, but I was determined to extract some information.

"I have been guarding you against the Germans! Last night I patrolled your coast!" I informed him with great enthusiasm.

He looked at me rather curiously, I thought.

"Did ye see anything?" he inquired.

"I thought I did; but ach! how can one be sure in the dark?"

"It's no easy," he agreed.

"Then you have tried too, my friend?"

"Aye," he admitted, splashing on the paint.

"Were any of your family patrolling last night?"

"No," said he curtly.

"Who was guarding this part here?" I asked.

"I dinna ken."

I wondered, but I saw that there was not much more to be learned here. He had denied that any of his household were out, for what that was worth, and at that I bade him good morning and turned back.

I fell to walking more and more slowly, and at last I stopped and decided to accompany my thoughts with a little lunch. The boundary wall at this point ran close to the edge of the rocks, and was rather higher than usual. I thought for a moment of sitting down and lunching under its lee, and then I noticed that it was very loosely built of large beach boulders, and that the off-shore breeze was whistling through it like a sieve; so I decided to descend to the sheltered beach and lunch there. That decision saved my life.

I clambered down, chose a rock to sit behind, and was just putting my hand in my pocket for my packet of sandwiches, when "crack!" — something whistled close to my head, and smacked against a ledge behind me. "Crack!" again, and the smack this time resounded from the rock beside me. At the third "crack!" I was flat on my face behind that rock, and my hand was in another pocket. It brought out something more to the point than sandwiches.

I had a pretty good idea by this time where the shots were coming from, and I risked a quick rise of my head to make quite sure. I just had time to see a flash through one of the holes in the wall, and down went my head again as a bullet smacked once more upon the ledge behind. Yet another shot followed, and seemed to miss everything, for I heard no sound of lead on stone, and then up went my head and hand together, and I was covering that bit of wall with my own revolver. I saw that my enemy was no very dead shot, and I meant to risk his fire and snap at the flash through the wall. I knew I could get quite near enough his peep-hole to startle him, and after I had sprinkled the near neighbourhood of that aperture for five or six seconds, I thought it probably odds against his keeping his head sufficiently to do much aiming. To be quite candid, I must confess that it was a soothing sensation to feel I was the better man with a gun, and that I should have been in a proper fright if it had been the other way about. One hears a good deal of discussion on the quality of courage nowadays, and there is my own small contribution.

The seconds passed, my finger on the trigger and my eyes glued to the largest crevice I could spy in that wall, but there was never another flash or crack. And then it suddenly struck me that the man might be moving down the wall to get a shot at me from another angle. As usual I acted on impulse, and this time I think correctly. Scarcely had the thought struck me than I was up and rushing forward to the shelter of the grass bank where the rocks began. There, quite safe but rather cramped, I crept along parallel to the wall for about a hundred yards. And then I jumped up, charged the wall, and brought half of it down as I hurled myself over. As my feet touched the ground I looked in both directions, very nearly simultaneously, and saw—nothing.

Whether in that first instant I was more disappointed or relieved, I should be afraid to say; but as soon as I had had a few seconds to think, my one feeling was disgust that the fellow had given me the slip. I took to my heels and ran along that wall first in one direction and then in the other, but there was not a sign of a living creature. And the sickening thing was that by this time he might have done one of several things—headed away from the shore at top speed as soon as he ceased firing, in which case he would be far enough by now, or lain down in one of the several fields of corn near by, or crossed the wall farther along and hidden among the rocks; and it was quite impossible to guess which. I pondered over the problem for a few moments, and then decided that as it was perfectly hopeless to search the corn or the beach, I would risk it and hasten inland on the off-chance of getting a clue, so I chose a grass field and set off across it at a trot.

The ground rose for about fifty yards and then fell sharply, and as I topped this rise I came right on to a familiar figure. It was my friend Jock, and he seemed unusually excited—almost, in fact, intelligent.

"Stranger!" he gabbled, pointing in the direction I was going. "Jock seen stranger!"

I followed his dirty finger, and a couple of hundred yards or so ahead I spied a figure strolling along a by-road—rather ostentatiously strolling, it seemed to me.

"Thank you, Jock," said I, "you're a good man! Here's your half-crown!"

I dropped to a walk now, and by the time the stranger and I met I think I looked about as cool as he did. It was Mr O'Brien, as I had guessed at the first glance.

"Been for a walk?" he inquired.

"Having a stroll along the shore," said I.

He started a little and looked at me hard.

"Hullo!" said he, "I could have sworn you talked like a foreigner the last and first time I had the honour of meeting you. Were we both sober, do you think?"

I in turn looked at the man

keenly. If his surprise was not genuine, it was as good a bit of acting as I ever saw, on or off the stage, and it was exactly the most disarming thing he could possibly say. Indeed, it turned the tables on me completely, and it was I who was now left in the position of having something awkward to explain away.

"It must have been the weather," I said lightly. "I'm never drunk before lunch."

"And be damned if I get the chance at any time of day! You've heard of my sad complaint, eh?"

"No," said I, "I'm afraid I haven't. Nothing infectious?"

He gave one of his unpleasant hoots of laughter.

"Lord, you think I'm a respectable member of society then? Good for you; keep on thinking it—but you'll have to keep away from my friends!"

"It takes me all my time to keep clear of my own," said I.

His narrow eyes seemed to approve of me.

"You're not Irish?" he inquired.

"No; I've enough to answer for without that."

"You ought to be," said he. "You've got some wit. Damn the English, and double-damn the Scotch! Well, we're evidently both going in the other direction, so good-bye to you!"

What was I to make of this? What was to be thought of the whole morning's adventure? Only one thing was perfectly clear to me,—that I had a very dangerous, very determined, and very artful enemy in this island—or, almost certainly, several enemies, and that instead of the hunter I had become the hunted. They might fear me, but they certainly did not fear to attack me whether by day or night. Had I sat down behind that trellis-like wall as I intended, I shivered a little to think of my fate. I should have been shot at twelve inches' range, and that would have been the end of my spy-hunt. I began to realise that it was much longer odds on my being dead within the next forty-eight hours than on my getting on the tracks of that oilskinned man.

And then as I was walking back thinking these none too cheery thoughts, something put the parachute into my head. I had not thought of it before since the first night when I hid it. It took me a little time to get my bearings, but I found my way to the clover field at last, and then made for the low wall, with the bed of rank grass and docken leaves beneath it. I hunted up that wall and down that wall, but never a sign of the parachute was there.

"That is how they've bowled me out!" I said to myself. "They have heard by this time of the missing balloon; then they found the parachute, saw that the dates coincided, and spotted me!"

XII. THE KEY TURNED.

When I got back I felt very little inclined for society. I passed through the hall as quietly as I could, went straight up to my room, and heaved a sigh of relief when the door was safely shut behind me. Perhaps my adventures had been following a little too quickly on the heels of one another; anyhow it was quiet which I craved at that moment. It was a reposeful room, scented with honeysuckle, and for a few minutes I enjoyed an unwonted sensation of peace; and then my eyes chanced to fall on the chest of drawers. I stared for a moment, and then bent over the lock of the upper drawer, that drawer which concealed the mythical uniform coat, with the important mythical papers in the pocket.

There could not be a shadow of doubt as to what had happened. The lock had been taken off and put in again since I last saw it. And now, of course, my hosts knew as well as I did that no uniform coat had ever lain there, and consequently that their guest had never worn one.

I had meant to slack, but this situation obviously required some thinking over, so I lit a pipe, threw myself down on the bed, and began.

"Bowled out again!" I thought. "At the rate the wickets are going down the innings must be dashed near over. They've found out my German accent was a fake, they've discovered the parachute, and know I neither landed from a British cruiser nor a German submarine, and now they know that I lied about that coat.

"And what is my own score? By Gad, I don't honestly think I've made a single run! I have no idea whether these discoveries have been made by people in league with one another, who pool their knowledge, or whether my enemies only know part of all this, and if so, which part. However, that matters less since they know enough to shoot at sight.

"Furthermore, I don't know which of them are my enemies, or how many there are, or in fact any dashed thing about them. Therefore——"

At that point I fell fast asleep. My late night, the long morning in that stirring air, and the excitement of two missed-by-a-hair's-breadth murders, had trundled me out again. The last wicket was down, and the innings over as I slept. The one bit of luck I did have was not setting the bed on fire with my pipe.

It was about three o'clock when I went up to my room. It was 6.10 when I was awakened by a sharp click. I opened my eyes and looked stupidly all round the room. There was absolutely nothing to be seen there. Then with a strong presentiment I jumped up and tried to open the door. It was as I suspected. I was locked in.

My hand went to my hip-pocket and found my revolver

all right. They had not ventured to try and get at that. Then I began to wonder why the key had not been turned sooner.

"Something has just happened to make them lock the door," I thought, and thereupon I went to the window and looked out.

My room faced right down the island, the north shore to the right—the scene of all my adventures, the sheltered south shore to the left. Craning my head to the left I could just spy a small vessel of the trawler or drifter type lying close inshore. She seemed to be flying a white flag — it might have been the white ensign at the distance. And then I got a glimpse of three or four figures walking towards the house, and one of these wore a white cap.

"Now we shan't be long!" I said to myself. "But what the dickens does it all mean?"

About ten long minutes passed before I heard voices and footsteps on the stairs. The lock clicked again, the door opened, and there stood a square-shouldered man in dark blue, with three gold rings on his sleeve, and a familiarly firm mouth and pair of steady eyes. For an instant I could scarcely believe my own eyes, and then I knew that it actually was—of all people—my own cousin, Commander John P. N. Whiteclett, R.N., whom I had last heard of two years before the war when he was on the East Indies station. And behind him I caught a glimpse of Jean Rendall. There may have been others, but all I was conscious of was her eager face, the eyes brighter than ever, and the lips a little parted in tense excitement.

My cousin Jack spoke first.

"Good Lord, *you* of all people, Roger!"

"My dear Jack!" I cried, and then I checked myself and shut that door.

"Well," said my cousin, with more candour than politeness, "I always thought you would end in jail, Roger, and you've had a dashed near squeak this time, let me tell you. What new form of lunacy have you bust out into?" His eye fell on my revolver. "And what are you doing with that thing? If it's going to be suicide, let me fetch in a witness before you begin. I hate being found alone with a body."

"Is that your ship?" I demanded.

"She's one of 'em. I'm boss of a few dozen of these floating palaces at present. In fact we're a patrol, and I've caught you red-handed on my own beat, and what I want to know is what the devil are you doing on it? Not trying to elope with that little bit of fluff, I hope, because I can assure you she doesn't love you in the least, Roger."

"You mean well, old thing," I said; "but you've guessed wrong as usual, Jack. Take me to your ship, for the Lord's sake, and I'll tell you the whole yarn there."

"These good people probably expect a bit of explanation," he suggested.

"The Rendalls? Not yet!

Wait till you've heard everything yourself. Tell 'em then, if you like—but I don't think you will."

He looked at me curiously.

"Well," said he, "let's be off then. Don't you even want to say good-bye?"

"I'll send them a Christmas card," I said.

"What, after all the trouble they've taken to round you up?"

"Do you mean to say they sent for you?"

"Rather! Urgent wire."

The prospect of facing my grim host and his disdainful daughter struck me forcibly as less pleasing than ever.

"Come on!" I said. "I'm going to bolt!"

We went downstairs and out of the front door like a couple of burglars. The Commander did not appear to relish this performance particularly, but I went first, and he had to keep pace with me.

At the door we found the escort provided for me, and very surprised they looked as they followed us to see their Commander so unaccountably intimate with his captive; but fortunately there was no sign of the laird or his daughter. I looked round once, and felt sure I saw a well-known slip of a figure standing against the weather-beaten wall of the old mansion gazing after us —with what sensations? I wondered very much.

"When did they wire for you?" I asked.

"Somewhere round about midday."

"And what did they say?"

"'They'?" repeated my cousin. "Why drag in the fair Miss Rendall? Her father did the wiring—at least I presume so."

"Assuming he did, what did he say?"

"Suspicious stranger come to Ransay — gave incorrect account of himself. That was the gist of it. Oh, he used the word 'urgent,' I remember."

"Incorrect account? That was probably after they had picked the lock of my drawer and had something to go upon."

Again my cousin looked at me curiously.

"This sounds interesting," he said, and quickened his stride.

We reached a little unfrequented pier and jumped into the drifter's boat. Sitting in the stern, I looked over my shoulder with very mixed feelings at the receding shores of the island of Ransay. It had baffled me, made a fool of me, nearly murdered me; but after all it had saved my life when the odds were a million to one against me, and it had crowded into that life the four most exciting days and nights I had ever spent.

XIII. ON THE DRIFTER.

My cousin led me into the small deckhouse that served as his cabin when he was aboard. Through the windows

we could see the afternoon gradually fading into evening and the western sky turn crimson, as we ploughed our way up winding sounds between the low-lying isles.

He produced a flask and a couple of bottles of soda-water, lit his pipe, saw that door and windows were safely closed, and leaned over the table.

"Now," said he, "how the devil did you get to this place? That's the first question. They told me some yarn about a parachute, which I take it was really a hair net or a lobster pot——"

"It wasn't," I interrupted, "it was a parachute, and I landed in it. Do you mean to say you hadn't heard of my disappearance in a runaway balloon?"

"What!" he exclaimed. "Are you the same Merton? I noticed the name, of course, but do you mean to tell me they're giving away R.N.V.R. commissions as promiscuously as all that?"

"They give 'em to the pick of young England's manhood," I assured him. "The idea is to make the Navy into a real live force, capable of originality and enterprise."

He grinned.

"They've struck the originality all right," he admitted; "but, Lord, the time that will be wasted court-martialling you fellows! However, let's hear the whole yarn from the beginning."

I began at the snapping of the cable, and told him my adventures faithfully down to the moment when he unlocked my bedroom door. He only interrupted once or twice to get some point or other clear, and then when I had finished he leaned back and looked at me hard across the table.

"Roger," he said, "I've known you long enough and well enough to know that you are not a deliberate liar, but I hope you'll forgive my saying that this is a damned tough bullet to chew."

"It sounds a tall order," I admitted; "but it's true."

He filled his pipe thoughtfully.

"I may as well tell you," he said in a moment, "that I am not at present a very credulous person. From the moment this blessed war began and I got this job, I have done little else than investigate spy legends, and I have come to the deliberate conclusion that there is either a lot more imagination in the world than any one has ever dreamt of, or that mankind are chronic and inveterate liars. I haven't yet had the luck to find one single true bill in any story I've investigated."

"Your luck has turned now, Jack."

"Possibly," he said slowly; "and mind you, Roger, there's no doubt whatever that a devilish secret service system exists, or that it's being used against us for all it's worth. Secret petrol bases for their submarines, secret signalling from the shore, mine-laying by so-called neutral ships—all that sort of thing is going on under our noses. I've got several very shrewd suspicions, and

hope to bring off one or two little discoveries not a thousand miles from this very spot. In fact, if you had pitched on any one of three or four other islands for the scene of your tale, or if what you'd seen had been just a little different, I wouldn't have questioned a word of your story. But Ransay is not one of the suspected islands, and your friend in oil-skins doesn't fit into anything I happen to have heard from other sources."

"Look here," I said, "what's the good of being cousins if we aren't candid? Do you or don't you believe me?"

John Whiteclett looked at me very steadily and spoke in his most deliberate accents.

"I believe that you believe every word of it. But I know you're an imaginative fellow, and I can see for myself already that at least three-quarters of your yarn can be explained away very easily."

"Explain it."

"Well, my dear fellow, just look at things for a moment from the point of view of a perfectly innocent and loyal inhabitant of Ransay — the Rendalls for instance. You appear on their shores absolutely mysteriously in the dead of night, you admit yourself you lay yourself out to behave like a thinly disguised Hun, d—d thinly too, apparently! You blow in from nowhere on the doctor, and talk with a German accent. You blow in on the laird, begin talking with an accent and then drop it. You pitch him a cock-and-bull yarn about being landed from a cruiser and wanting to hide your uniform coat, and so on. You conduct yourself like a criminal in church, and wander out at night. Naturally the Rendalls —and everybody else—eye you strangely to your face, and try to find out a little more behind your back. Do you see?"

"There's something certainly in all this," I had to admit.

"Then they find your parachute——"

"Who found it?"

"I haven't asked that yet; but I shall, of course. Anyhow it was found, and as evidently you had hid it. One point discovered against you. Then the Rendalls decide on stronger measures — and very rightly too, I think. They open your drawer, and find you never had a uniform coat at all. Most wisely they then wire to me, and to keep you from bolting lock you in your room."

"Dash it," said I, "I seem at least to have succeeded in providing them with a devilish good excuse for every blessed thing they did!"

"I don't honestly think you have left yourself with any grounds whatever for suspecting the Rendalls of anything."

"On the other hand, sending for you and having me arrested would be an excellent way of getting rid of me when they were certain who I was—or rather, wasn't."

"And who did they make apparently certain you were not? A British officer! That was the natural conclusion when they opened that drawer.

No, no, the Rendalls come out of it all right. Then let's take the doctor. He looks at you suspiciously—as well he might."

"Before I spoke!" I interjected.

"And do you flatter yourself that your appearance, without a cap, and in a buttoned-up oilskin on a fine day, was reassuring?"

"But the blind?"

"Did you never see a blind come down with a run by mistake? There's a blind in my smoking-room at home that comes down like that whenever you touch it. There's nothing against the doctor either—so far anyhow."

"And his friend O'Brien?"

"Ah, that's a different story. Mind you, you have shown me not a shred of evidence against the fellow. Still, what's he doing there? That's a thing I'm going to find out within the next four-and-twenty hours. But you can't prove that he *did* anything, and you can't suspect a man of treason just because you don't like his looks. There are possibly prejudiced people who don't like ours."

"Wait till you see him."

"I shall," said my cousin with an emphasis that hardly seemed to mean what I meant. "As for the Scollay family—nothing against them whatever, except that they live at a lonely spot on the shore, which I should say was rather their misfortune than their fault."

"And the old boy on the road, who, Miss Rendall declared, doesn't exist?"

"How long did you give her to run over all the inhabitants of the island? Did she look up a list of them, or a rent-roll, or anything?"

"No," I admitted. "Still, she seemed very positive, and she lives in the place and must know everybody. If she fibbed that's certainly suspicious. If she was correct, then I met some one in disguise."

"Well," said he with an indulgent and extremely irritating smile, "I shall inquire about that old gentleman too. But frankly, I've no doubt whatever that Miss Rendall simply forgot him when you asked her."

"All the characters seem cleared except mine," I remarked.

"Wait a bit, old chap. Now, we'll come to the really suspicious things that you actually did see. First, the man on the shore."

"Can't he be explained away?"

"Possibly," said Jack imperturbably, "but he needs a good deal more explaining. You admit you became a bit lightheaded soon afterwards."

"I've thought of that explanation myself, but it won't wash when he or one of his friends went for me on the shore."

"Are you dead certain anybody did try to go for you? You admit you saw nobody."

"I saw that curved thing—like a scimitar."

"But who on earth would be using a scimitar in these islands? And what a futile way to use it—jabbing down at you from overhead!"

"The point of it hit the rock hard enough."

"You had only the sound to go by."

"That's all," I admitted.

"And you heard that in the dark." He shook his head. "My dear fellow, I know you are telling me honestly what you *think* happened, but to be quite frank——"

He broke off and shook his head again.

"Well," said I, "that's explained away very happily. What I saw was only something else, and what I heard was something else too. You put the alternatives so clearly, Jack, that one can't help being convinced. And what about the shooting affair? I only heard a thingmabob and saw a what-you-may-call-it, I suppose?"

"My dear Roger, I only want to test the alternatives and see what *can't* be explained away. Have you ever been under fire before?"

"No, but I've seen pictures of it in the illustrated papers."

"Dash it, be serious!" said he. "You have no doubt whatever that somebody blazed either at you or at something else from behind that wall?"

"Or at something else? What do you mean?"

"There weren't any duck about, or anything of that kind? I've known a wild shot blaze both barrels within six inches of my own head and explain he had never noticed me."

"I was rather too preoccupied to notice whether there were any duck there when he began," said I; "but unless they were deaf duck there certainly wouldn't be any left after he'd loosed off his first bullet. Besides, one doesn't usually shoot duck with bullets."

"One might with a rook rifle."

"I admit that one might; also that a very excitable person might go on shooting after the duck had gone. But do you really mean to tell me, Jack, that that explanation satisfies you?"

"I don't say that it does absolutely, and I quite admit that the weakness of my explanations is that your story requires three of them—none being perfectly satisfactory. However, it comes to this, that we have narrowed the field down to three incidents that want a bit of explanation. Everything else points as much one way as the other."

"Which way?"

"To your being mistaken for a spy yourself."

A horrid thought struck me. It was so horrid that it took a little pluck to get it out.

"In that case, supposing some patriotic individual had tried first to stab and then to shoot me, for his country's sake?"

"By Jove!" exclaimed my cousin, and gazed thoughtfully into space for a bit. Then he said, "That's possible; but it's a tall order, too, and it leaves out the man on the shore."

I was visited by another horrid thought.

"He might have been spy-hunting!"

"Well, in that case we can

easily get on to his tracks. There will be no point in his denying it. But would the conversation fit that theory?"

I thought for a moment, and then said with heartfelt relief—

"No, it couldn't possibly."

My cousin fell silent and stared into the thickening dusk. Then he looked round with a start and said—

"We're nearly in."

We both went out on deck and saw at the head of the bay before us houses and lights on shore and a church tower against the evening sky.

"Well, Roger," said he, "I'll go into this business very carefully and make the most thorough inquiry. Don't think I'm not keen on getting at the bottom of it. You've got to get off at once and rejoin your ship, of course?"

I said I must.

"I tell you what I'll do," he went on—"of course we've got to lie very low about this sort of thing, but I feel I owe you some account of what happens. I'll write and let you know as soon as I have finished my investigation."

John Whiteclett was the best of fellows, shrewd and level-headed and a first-class officer, but somehow or other I felt small confidence in his getting the better of the cunning foe on Ransay. However, it was all that could be done now. My own part was finished, and I had to confess I had failed ignominiously.

XIV. MY COUSIN'S LETTER.

Three weeks later I received this letter from my cousin:—

"My dear Roger,—As I promised, I am sending you a chit to tell you the result of our inquiry into the Ransay mystery. Of course, you will understand that this is strictly for your own eye, and mustn't be talked about.

"Well, I wanted to leave no stone unturned to get at the bottom of the affair, so we got up a *pukka* detective from London, a man named Bolton, said to be a first-class fellow at the job. He spent a solid week in the island, and seems to have poked his nose into pretty nearly every house and spoken to pretty nearly every inhabitant from the laird down. Taking a tip from your tale, he posed as a cattle-dealer (which is precisely what he looks like), and of course he never let on that he knew of your existence—or mine either.

"The result of his inquiries is, firstly, nothing proved against anybody, and no evidence of anything fishy going on in the place. This last point confirms my own experience, for, as I told you, I haven't yet been able to associate this particular island with any of the suspicious ongoings which undoubtedly are happening.

"Secondly, your friend O'Brien turns out to be a

gentleman with a failing for liquor, who was sent up by his relations in Ireland about six months ago to live under Dr Rendall's charge, there being no pubs in Ransay—and many in the island he came from. I find that it is by no means unusual to send thirsty souls to publess isles; and beyond the fact that O'Brien came up very 'convanient' for this war, and is pretty free with his tongue on the subject of England's sins and shortcomings, there is really nothing positive against the man. However, we are running no risks, and as we are God and Destiny rolled into one in these islands, we gave Mr O'Brien his marching orders, and by this time he has presumably either secured a drink at last, or his friends have shut him up in some teetotal paradise a little farther from the scene of war.

"Bolton's opinion is that O'Brien was without doubt the man who fired at you, looking to the type of gentleman he is, and the fact that you ran into him immediately afterwards, and especially the fact that he actually does possess an old rook rifle. He thinks he may have done it out of sheer Irish devilry, you offering so convenient a target, just as they pot landlords in his own happy country. A man can hardly have drunk as heavily as he must have done without upsetting his brain a bit, and this theory seems to me not at all unlikely.

"Bolton thinks it hardly conceivable that O'B. can have had any deliberate idea of getting rid of you, since it is certain that he wasn't the man in oilskins you met the night you landed — or rather, dropped. He can't have been, *because he doesn't know a word of German.* We ought to have thought of that clue ourselves. Bolton was on to it at once, and points out that it puts out of court the whole inhabitants of the island except Miss Rendall, who has a pretty good schoolgirl's knowledge of German, and her father, who has been abroad a lot, and knows a bit of the language. And apart from all other considerations, the man in oilskins can't have been either of them owing to their height. Miss R. is too short and Mr R. too tall.

"Assuming, therefore, that you weren't a bit light-headed or anything of that kind (which, I am bound to say, Bolton thinks quite a likely explanation), the man you met *must* have landed from a submarine and gone away again in her. Bolton feels positive on this point, and I must say I agree with him.

"The only remaining difficulty is the attack on the shore. Here Bolton takes exactly the same line as I did when I questioned you. He thinks that as you didn't actually see anybody, and as what you think you saw and heard are so vague and indefinite and so difficult to fit into any known method of murder, one can't really draw any conclusions, and he quotes

various cases he has known of people who fancied they were struck or seized or fired at in the dark, when actually there was some other explanation.

"By the way, as to the old gentleman with tinted spectacles who asked for a match, Bolton made inquiries of a number of people about the old men in the island, and he even took the trouble to interview them all. None have tinted spectacles and all deny having spoken with you. I am afraid that this discovery made him a bit sceptical about some of the other incidents. However, he went into the whole thing very carefully indeed, and I think we can all feel satisfied that with the departure of Mr O'Brien the possibility of trouble within the island has been eliminated. Of course the Lord only knows who may not land on the place by night, and they may quite possibly have squared one or two of the natives to show a light, or to keep their eyes shut, or help them in one way or another. But that's rather a different story.

"I am sorry I have nothing better to satisfy your dramatic soul; but, hang it, a fellow who flies from the middle of the North Sea in a balloon and then drops through a fog and hits an island a few miles square, and afterwards gets mistaken for a spy, and shot at and finally arrested, oughtn't to complain!

"Good luck to you. Keep out of balloons, and don't part with that revolver.—Yours ever,

J. P. N. WHITECLETT."

And there for the present—and perhaps for ever—the story ends. I sat down straight off and began to write out this full, true, and particular account of the whole adventure, partly to keep my memory of everything fresh, and partly because it strikes me as not half a bad yarn in itself. Now that I have finished the job, I must say that whether or no it will convince anybody else, it makes me feel more certain than ever that more has been going on in that island than met Mr Bolton's eye.

Professional detectives are no doubt very useful men at jobs they are accustomed to and when pitted against the ordinary criminal. But these war problems are quite new, and utterly different even from the German secret service machinations in time of peace. And the men they are opposed to are very extraordinary criminals indeed; they are a highly-trained scientific force, as much a wing of the German fighting forces as their air service or their submarines.

What chance has a man who looks like a cattle-dealer against these experts, especially when he is only in action for a week and starts with the assumption that the few invaluable facts given him are mostly works of imagination? Possibly he may have fluked upon the remedy by removing O'Brien, and if the island of Ransay gives no more trouble for the rest of this war, it will certainly look as though he had. But in that case he will have been uncommon lucky, because he seems to me to have overlooked or

dismissed practically everything significant.

Take, for instance, the actual words used by my oilskinned friend. They most distinctly implied that he was living on shore. Take the incident of the blind, which may perhaps have been, as John Whiteclett says, an everyday accident, but which certainly happened in the house where the one man they do suspect was living, and would as certainly involve the doctor if it were not a mere accident. Look at my security while I was humbugging them by my suspicious conduct, and then the unscrupulous and quickly repeated attempts to get rid of me after two things had happened—my dropping of my accent at the Rendalls and the discovery of the parachute. Take that night on the shore when Miss Rendall escorted me armed with a pistol, and her father joined her at the very place and the very time when the attack was made on me. As to its being an imaginary attack, my last doubts dissipated when I was fired at next day.

Then as to the idea of Mr O'Brien trying to shoot duck, or suddenly being inspired by high-spirited homicidal mania, I simply decline to accept such absurd interpretations. I am not in the least sure it was he, to begin with. I feel convinced that more than one man is in it, and which conspirator took which part, who can say on the little evidence one has?

Again, take Mr Bolton's brilliant idea of inquiring who could speak German. How did he inquire? Probably asked them! Is he a German scholar himself? The odds are a thousand to one against it. Or take the mysterious old man with the tinted spectacles. His appearance by that roadside, and subsequent disappearance into space, is one of the oddest features of the case. I have no doubt at all now that the wax-match inquiry was the beginning of a series of questions and answers which would have proved me a fellow-conspirator if I had only known them. They probably became doubly suspicious of me from that moment, and only waited to make quite sure before going all out to kill me. And yet, Bolton, by coolly assuming I was a liar or a dreamer, missed the entire significance of the incident.

But when it comes to asking myself honestly which people precisely I suspect, and how I propose to separate the incidents which (I freely admit) are perfectly consistent with the theory that I was genuinely suspected myself, from the incidents which cannot be explained on those grounds, and work out a water-tight case against anybody in particular, I must confess that I am fairly beaten. I know that I don't want to suspect that girl, though she did treat me like a member of a lower race, and scored off me badly at the end; and I do want to suspect O'Brien. By the way, was he a real drunkard? I rather begin to wonder.

And that is the very unsatisfactory end of the matter so far.

PART II.

I. AN IDEA.

I wish I had said that I felt sure my cousin's letter was not the last of the business on Ransay. One would like to be the only correct prophet this war has produced. It was not the end by any manner of means, as I learned within two days of finishing that last chapter. I wrote it, and the two or three before it, in the convalescent hospital at Winterdean Hall, finishing it, I remember, on a Wednesday; and I picked up the scent again on the very Friday following.

I had been laid out in an insignificant North Sea scrap, but though the scrap was small the wounds were unpleasant, and I was still rather glad to lie easy in a movable summer-house on the terrace. I was well on the mend, but had walked a little too far that morning, and there I lay stretched half asleep in a deck-chair, out of the wind and basking in the sun. It was the end of the first week in February, but the day was mild as milk, and in my overcoat I felt positively hot. Rooks were cawing over the winter woodlands below the terrace, a faint restful line of blue hills rose far away beyond, and a gorgeous peacock was strolling sedately on the lawn. I was utterly content to lie there and doze, when I heard a familiar voice.

"Right! I see where he is; thank you," it said.

"Jack Whiteclett!" I said to myself.

It was always pleasant to see Jack, but at that moment a bore to be disturbed. Little did I guess how thorough and final that disturbance was going to be.

He appeared in the open door of my shelter, keen eyes, blue serge, three rings, and all complete. I expected a jibe at my beard, but evidently I struck him as too sorry an object for mirth.

"Well, old chap," said he, "you've earned a rest, and I'm glad to see you're taking it."

This from Jack was subtly flattering, and I did my best to look the wounded hero.

"Where did they get you?" he asked.

"In my beard," said I, "left side of the jaw. Also right ankle, and a souvenir under the ribs."

"Lame?"

"Still a little, but improving."

"The beard is quite becoming," he observed.

"Look at it well, then, while you have the chance, for they say they'll let me shave it in a week."

"You're well on the mend, then?"

"Thank the Lord."

"Then I needn't give you any more sympathy. Congratulations instead."

"On getting a bit of blighty?"

"On getting a bit of ribbon."

I opened my eyes, for this was the first I had heard of it.

"It isn't out yet," said he, "but I believe it's to be your doom. Somebody has presumably bribed some one at the Admiralty. Uncle Francis tipped me the wink. You've evidently quite made your peace there, Roger; so congratulations again."

This hint of a decoration was gratifying enough, and to hear, on top of it, his assurance that my dear old uncle had really opened his heart again, nearly upset me disgracefully. I was evidently still a little weaker than I realised. However, Jack was tact itself, and the talk turned to everyday matters.

He had been sitting beside me for some little time discussing the war, the world, and the devil, before it began to strike me as quite remarkably kind, even for so good a fellow as Jack Whiteclett, to come so far out of his way to look me up. His own wife was at Portsmouth last I heard of her, all his other interests were in London, and yet here he was looking up a cousin in a hospital a couple of hundred miles away from either place.

"By the way, how long have you got?" I asked.

"A week."

I sat up in my deck-chair.

"Only a week! I say this is extraordinarily good of you to come down here and see me."

"Oh, I wanted to see how heroes bear their wounds," he smiled; but I felt certain there was something more left unsaid.

"Jack, old chap, what's up? I see in your eye there's something else."

He hesitated a moment, and then said—

"There was, but I'm not going to bother you with it now. I didn't know how fit you might be."

Naturally I made him go on.

"Would it worry you if I were to yarn a little about that adventure of yours in Ransay?" he asked.

"Worry me! I've been thinking of little else since I came to this restful place. In fact I've been finishing off a full, true, and particular account of the adventure. Any further news?"

His mouth grew compressed, and a frown settled over his eyes.

"Nothing definite, except that the infernal island has been worrying me a lot lately. You were quite right, Roger, and I withdraw my last doubt with many apologies. Something is very far wrong in that place. Submarines have been seen for certain two or three times, and signals on shore, and the devil knows all what. But we can't find a clue or a trace of anything to lay our hands on!"

"And all this is since O'Brien left?"

He nodded.

"Yes. If he were in it you were quite right in suspecting

a gang. If he wasn't, then the fellow — or fellows, are still there. I am quite certain now, Roger, that you were absolutely right. Some one is actually living in that comparatively small island, and working a lot of mischief, and we haven't even the foggiest notion who to suspect."

"Have you applied to Mr Bolton?" I asked a little maliciously.

"Damn Mr Bolton! The fellow botched the whole business. He lost the scent while it was still warm, and now it's as cold as mutton, and one has to begin all over again! I wanted badly to have a yarn with you about it, Roger. You may have some ideas. Bolton had none, and I have none."

"Are you allowed to tell me exactly what has been seen?"

"I am not allowed, but I can tell you, if you won't repeat anything."

And so I may not go into particulars in this narrative. However, that makes no difference, for beyond indicating that the north-west end, out by the Scollay's farm, and the barren uninhabited tip of the island beyond, was the danger zone, these particulars gave no clue, and suggested no fresh idea. Of course they naturally suggested people living in that vicinity, and yet this was far from inevitable, because that coast was the best for the enemy's purpose, and his friend or friends on shore might come some considerable distance to get in touch with him. In fact, it would be a pretty obvious precaution to live as far from the scene of actual operations as possible, though equally obviously it would be a less convenient arrangement.

As for the precautions which Whiteclett was able to take, all that I am permitted to say about them is, that instead of the amateur coast patrol arrangement in vogue when I was there, a few men from a certain unit were put on to the job instead. But my cousin had no control over this, and as he alone realised—in fact, could realise — the peculiar danger on this particular island, the number of men spared for Ransay was very small (you could count them on one hand with something over), and they were but ordinary honest members of this unit at that — not experts at the game. Consequently he was a little doubtful whether the safeguard was any better than before.

Well, we talked the whole thing over and over again, and I honestly could suggest nothing to add to what I had told him before. And then I asked him—

"Have you yourself seen no cause whatever to suspect any one? Nothing happened—even a very little thing?"

He began to shake his head, and then said—

"Well, there was just one thing that made me suspicious for a moment, but then I came to the conclusion that my suspicions wouldn't hold water. A short time ago Dr Rendall came in to see me, and begged for leave to keep another drunk — what he called an

alcoholic patient. He said he had heard of a man whose friends wanted to send him up to him, and offered to give me all sorts of guarantees of his honesty, et-cetera, et-cetera. I gathered that the doctor must be pretty hard up, and this patient would make all the difference to him. In fact he practically told me so."

"Of course you said no?"

"I was sympathetic, but told him I was afraid it was no good. I didn't want to seem too sharp with him, just in case he might be a wrong 'un and would be the better of a little show of guilelessness. Of course I let him know later he couldn't have the fellow. But honestly, Roger, I can't think there was really anything suspicious in his request. In the first place, the trouble is going on without his inebriate. In the second place, the request would be too barefaced if he meant mischief."

"Still," I said, "it shows the man is hard up. Suppose he has been tempted?"

"In that case we must also suppose he has fallen and pocketed a bribe, and then he wouldn't be hard up any more."

"One doesn't know his difficulties. He might require a lot to cover them, and be in need of a fresh cheque now. And there's one thing, Jack, that has made me wonder sometimes. He is a cut above the ordinary local doctor in such a place. What's he doing there?"

"Well," said my cousin after a moment's thought, "the problem in my mind always comes back to this, that we are never likely to get much forrader until we can station a spy of our own in the place to watch what's going on. And how can one possibly manage that without giving away who the watcher is? If they know who he is, he will find out nothing, and probably have his throat cut. That's the difficulty."

I said nothing for a moment. A brilliant idea was beginning to dawn upon my mind.

"Nothing to suggest?" he asked.

"I suppose," I said, thinking hard, "that if you had wanted to, you could have let Dr Rendall have that man?"

My cousin stared at me.

"I shouldn't take the responsibility myself, but I daresay if I were lunatic enough to back him up, the powers that be might agree."

"Jack!" I exclaimed, "I'll be the alcoholic patient!"

For a moment I thought my cousin's eyes were going to start out of his head. Then they subsided and a grin began to steal over his face instead.

"By Gad!" he murmured.

"I'm the very man for the job! I've actually spoken to at least one of the gang in that island, apart from the old chap with spectacles. I know the ropes, so far as they are knowable. In fact, I've a kind of prospective right to the job."

He nodded.

"I quite admit that you have; also that I'd sooner have you there than any one else. Looking back, I think you had a most sporting try last time,

and I must say it seems to me that only some devilish bit of bad luck prevented you from bringing it off. Though what actually the bit of bad luck was has often puzzled me. But then," he added, "you aren't the fellow he wants."

"One drunk is as good as another so long as he pays the fee."

"But supposing, for the sake of argument, he had some reason for wanting this other man. Would he take you in that case?"

"He must, or he'd give himself away!"

"True for you, Roger. But how are we going to open negotiations without arousing suspicion? One might as well face all the difficulties."

"Oh, we can easily fix up that," said I. "My guardians will write and say they have heard of his excellent system, et-cetcera, and have hopes of making arrangements with the naval authorities, and so on. There will be no difficulty at all so far as that part goes."

"But, my dear chap, when you'd got there they'd spot you."

"With this beard — dyed black?" I cried, as inspiration trod on inspiration's heels. "And a pair of gold-rimmed glasses, and this limp—which will hide even my walk, and a complete change of clothes; who will spot me? Remember I was only there for a very few days six months ago."

"Your voice?"

"I only spoke in my natural voice to the two Rendalls; never to the doctor; in fact I've only met him once."

"But his cousins saw a good deal of you."

"I haven't been on the stage for nothing," I assured him. "I'll change my voice very little, not enough to make it difficult to keep up—throw in a lisp or something of that kind. You can trust me to do the thing thoroughly, Jack."

My cousin looked at me carefully.

"Yes," he admitted, "I think you are changed enough already to puzzle 'em; and with your beard dyed black—by the way, don't forget to dye your hair too, old chap!—and glasses, et-cetera, by jingo, I do believe you'll pass!"

"Now the thing is how to get permission: first leave for me, and second leave to land an alcoholic on the island. What about Uncle Francis—could he pull any strings for us? And will he, if he can?"

"The very man!" said Jack, "if he really will take the thing up. He's in it with the best kind of big-wig for our purpose. And I rather think the idea might appeal to his sense of humour. Anyhow, I'll see him to-night when I get back to town, and failing him, I'll try some one else."

And that was the abrupt end of those restful days, dozing in a deck-chair listening to the cawing rooks at Winterdean Hall Convalescent Hospital.

II. A LITTLE DINNER.

On Tuesday evening, just four days later, I hobbled up the steps of my uncle's club and put the same question I had so often put before to the same sleek benignant hall-porter.

"Sir Francis Merton?"

He was as benignant as ever, but he handed me over to an attractive war-worker with a detached air that showed he was quite unconscious of ever having seen me before. For an instant I was chilled, and then I realised the happiness of the omen. If my beard alone so changed me, there would be no fear of recognition when art had reinforced nature.

The only other guest had already arrived: Commander John Whiteclett. My uncle was talking to him confidentially before the fire, and at the sight of that familiar upstanding figure with the dominating nose above the determined mouth, and the fresh complexion and snow-white hair and genial eyes, all just the same as ever, I felt a sudden sense of confidence in the issue of my adventure. With such an ally at my back the chances of failure seemed almost negligible.

"Well, Roger," he cried, in his bluff strong voice (though I noticed it was discreetly lowered while there was any one within earshot), "I hear you've taken to liquor so badly that your friends have got to remove you from society! We always did think it would come to something of this kind; eh, Jack?"

"He always was a bad egg, sir," said my cousin. "I don't mind betting he hasn't brushed his beard."

"And that limp!" added Sir Francis. "Gad, I believe he's been kicked downstairs by an indignant husband!"

However, he pressed my arm as he laughed, and it was not a critical pressure.

"I can't shave owing to my shaky hand," I explained, "and the limp is port in the big toe."

"Port!" exclaimed my uncle. "No, no, my dear fellow, it's whisky-poisoning you suffer from. You began in your sixteenth year, and have been a trouble to your friends since you were twenty-one. However, I've got all the particulars written out for you, and mind you get 'em into your head and don't contradict yourself or me when you go to live with that doctor fellow."

Jack winked at me from the shelter of our respected uncle's back, and I hid a responsive smile. With all his virtues, Sir Francis Merton had never been fond of playing second fiddle, and this masterful seizure of our scheme and dictation of all the details was exceedingly characteristic. At the same time he was as shrewd as he was peremptory, and I felt satisfied his details would be sound.

"It's all right so long as he doesn't insist on disguising himself too and coming with me,"

I whispered to Jack as we went in to dinner.

"What I'm afraid of is that he'll go *instead* of you!" said Jack. "I never saw him keener about an idea."

We dined at a corner table whence we could see at once if any one approached too near, and I think my uncle must have arranged that neither of the nearest tables should be occupied; so he was able to get to work with the soup.

"I've arranged everything. Roger," he said, "you are on furlough so long as this job lasts. No questions will be asked, and you'll have a free hand. Only, of course, Jack will always keep an eye on you, and I shall be able to advise both of you according to circumstances."

Jack winked again hurriedly, and said with as much deference as though he were speaking to an Admiral—

"That's very good of you, sir. I shall keep you in touch with the situation, for I take it, it will be safer for Roger not to write more letters than necessary."

I glanced my thanks at him; and our uncle, after frowning for a moment dubiously, agreed that he feared he must be content with hearing from the Commander only.

"But there will be no harm in my writing to you, Roger, now and then," he added.

"No harm at all," I agreed.

"Well then," continued our host, "we come to the specific arrangements. Only two persons at the Admiralty know of this scheme, but they are quite powerful enough to get you into this island of yours all right. Of course, people who happen to hear of it may open their eyes a bit and talk of the slackness of our Naval Authorities, and it will do no harm, Jack, if you damn them a bit yourself—confidentially, you know, in case any one asks you how the devil this drunken fellow here has got into the place."

"If I simply give 'em my candid opinion of the drunken fellow's character," said Jack, "no one will dream for an instant we're supposed to be friends."

"They may guess we're near relations, however, old fellow," I suggested.

Sir Francis guffawed.

"I wonder if Roger will be as witty after a few weeks' teetotal diet?" he chuckled. "Mind you, Roger, you've got to play the game properly. No bringing a flask in your luggage or any humbug of that sort!"

"Don't you think an occasional relapse would add a touch of realism?" I suggested.

"Oh, if you can find liquor in the place, relapse by all means, so long as you don't give yourself away in your cups. But you've got to arrive without bottle, flask, or cup in your possession."

"It might be rather a happy touch, sir, if I were to go round sponging for drinks."

My uncle's earnestness was delightful. At this suggestion he put on his spectacles

and drew a paper from his pocket.

"Let me see," said he. "Here are a few directions given me by my own doctor, Sir James Macpherson. I had to give him some inkling of what I was after, but he is sworn to secrecy. Hum—No, Roger, you are trying religiously to cure yourself, and only very occasionally must the craving so far overcome you that you actually endeavour to secure alcoholic refreshment, as Sir James calls it. No promiscuous sponging, my boy, but a sponge now and then at considerable intervals might be advisable."

There was an interval of general conversation while one course succeeded another, and then Sir Francis resumed his instructions.

"With the help of a few tips from Sir James and my friends at the Admiralty, I have worked out the scheme very carefully, and I must beg you to get every detail most firmly into your head, Roger. Mind you, these poisonous fellows won't hesitate to stick a knife or a bullet into you, if they have the least suspicion of you. You know that as well as I do, and I don't want you to go and throw your life away, my boy."

I felt half inclined to smile, and half to do something more sentimental. He was such a dictatorial boss, and yet such a dear old fellow.

"I assure you I set more value on my life even than my friends do," I said.

"Well then, get these instructions off by heart—and don't forget one of them! I'll give you the paper to take away with you to-night, but meanwhile here are the principal points. In the first place, your name is Hobhouse—Thomas Sylvester Hobhouse."

I saw he was very pleased with this selection, and asked tactfully—

"How did you manage to choose such excellent names, Uncle Francis?"

"I chose one name from the Red Book, another from the Peerage, and another from the Clerical Directory, so that one gets—er—a more natural and lifelike combination in that way, and yet avoids a real name. I think Thomas came from the Clerical Directory—or was it the Peerage? Well, no matter, that's your name.

"And my occupation?"

"None: it saves prevarication and confusion. You've always been an idle dog, Roger, so I think 'a gentleman of no occupation' will be a sufficiently correct description. You are very well connected, by the way."

"I am aware of it," I said, with a polite bow to my uncle and cousin.

But my uncle had grown too serious to appreciate such small change of conversation.

"Your relatives," he continued, "are in such high positions that they are entitled to ask Dr Rendall not to make any indiscreet inquiries of his patient regarding his family, and also to appeal with success

to a certain influential gentleman in the Government for permission to dump you in these prohibited islands. You, of course, know nothing of these steps. You have just recovered from a severe attack of *delirium tremens*——"

"My dear uncle!" I gasped, "is that Sir James's idea?"

"It is putting into definite terms what he obviously suggested. Under those circumstances of course you know nothing of what your friends have been doing on your behalf. Dr Rendall being informed of all these facts, will naturally refrain from putting awkward questions, the answers to which you might forget, even if I composed them for you."

"And how did my relatives hear of Dr Rendall and the Island of Ransay?" I inquired.

"I have thought over that point very carefully, Roger, and I think the best plan will be to take Sir James a little more into my confidence and get him to write a personal letter to Dr Rendall. He will do it if I assure him it is for his country's sake, and his name will lull all suspicions."

My cousin and I thoroughly agreed with this last suggestion. In fact, we found little fault with any part of the programme dictated to us, except the *delirium tremens*. Even Jack, though he itched to see me thus labelled, agreed with me that a less definite form of drunkenness would be safer, and finally Sir Francis decided to substitute "an alcoholic breakdown."

As for the rest of my instructions, I made one or two mental reservations. For instance, if Dr Rendall himself was mixed up in the affair, he would scarcely refrain from putting questions to find out all about his guest; but I felt I need scarcely trouble my worthy uncle to compose the replies beforehand.

I remember that little dinner very vividly. As it chanced, it was my one glimpse of the old life of town and clubland and everything that goes with evening dress, seen just for that brief evening between months of mine-dodging and blizzard-facing in the North Sea followed by a hospital bed, and the lonely tempestuous isle of Ransay. The white napery, the gleam of glasses, the shaded electric lamps, the blazing fire, and the lofty, soft-carpeted room, left an impression that stayed with me for many a month to come. And in an easy-chair after dinner, smoking the special cigar that my uncle conscientiously recommended and sipping the ancient cognac he advised, I should have been perfectly willing to listen to him had he suggested pushing me into a soft shore billet and letting some other poor devil grow a beard and hunt for spies in northern gales instead.

But he was not that sort of uncle.

"It's the chance of your life, Roger," he said. "By Gad, I wish I were young enough to take on the job myself. But you'll do the family credit, I'm sure—if you only remember that this business requires dis-

cretion and caution quite as much as daring and resource!"

"Hear, hear!" said Jack. "Put that in your pipe and smoke it thoroughly, Roger."

"Whatever you do, don't trust one living soul in that place! The unlikeliest person may prove to be up to the neck in the business."

"Or only up to the ankles, yet they may give you away to some one else," added my cousin.

"And *à propos* of ankles," said my uncle, who was a confirmed bachelor, "beware of women most of all! Never trust a secret to a woman, Roger—never!"

"There are none to confide in," I assured him, "except Miss Rendall—and she is one of the suspected; whatever Jack's gallantry may say."

"My gallantry is a thing of the past," said Jack. "I suspect everybody in that d——d place. And I'd advise you to do the same."

"Everybody!" echoed Sir Francis. "And confide in no one!"

The evening came to an end at last, and with a sigh I left that comfortable smoking-room. As I passed out into the hall, however, my uncle took my arm and made one brief but comforting speech in my ear.

"Don't worry about money matters, Roger, old fellow. Of course I'm paying the doctor's fee, and if you ever need anything more just let me know. If you bring this off——"

He did not finish his sentence, but pressed my arm and gave me a nod and a smile.

(*To be continued.*)

S. G.

THE tramp of laden men sounds and resounds in the long arched subway. Groups of soldiers, bronzed, stained, tired, muddy, but cheerful and beaming, make for the slope to the London terminus, talking, laughing, and hurrying to catch their trains for home. Fourteen days, and one of them gone already! Must another be lost in travelling, or will there be trains to-night that they can catch?

They hurry on in small parties bound for the same destinations. Many remember the time-tables of eighteen months ago. But these tables are changed, and travel is restricted now. Here at the corner stand the Station Guides, ready without hesitation or doubt to direct any man to the train and platform he requires. There are cheers and thanks. But some men linger. For them there is no train before morning. They must be fed and lodged for the night. Bad luck! another half-day will be lost out of the precious fourteen. But there is no grumbling.

"It used to be ten days, so it don't matter so much as it did."

"Ah! and seven days when we first came home. And I knew a Highlander who had to get to the Lewis—took him three days to get there. I'll send the missus a telegram. Too late? Well, never mind, she won't mind the surprise."

"I'm sorry I can't get on, sir, I'm on special leave, and my wife's dying. Had a telegram on Tuesday, and I've been travelling ever since. They was very kind about letting me go. Do you think, sir, I couldn't get a part of the way? I'd rather be moving than waiting."

"Come to the Enquiry Office and we will see if we can't work round to it somehow."

And so, after a patient quarter of an hour's search in time-tables, with the kind and sympathetic help of the Lady Enquiry Clerk, we find we can get him to——, and a trunk-call telephone message to a friend of the Guide's, put through after midnight, secures a vehicle to drive him ten miles across country to his village. The handshake that rewards this arrangement was worth a hundred times the trouble of making it—and the broken word of thanks.

"Good-night, and may you find her better. Your coming will be her cure, perhaps."

. . . . . .

The ladies at the free buffet are busy. It is open night and day, and has been open since September 1914. Excellent tea, cocoa, sandwiches, and biscuits are free to every sailor or soldier whose pass will satisfy the military policeman at the door. Seats and tables and newspapers all make for rough comfort and rest in the draughty place. The men are grateful, and rarely fail to repay with thanks. Many put coins into the money-boxes as well, though it is never asked. All honour to the devoted ladies! And one is glad to see a British

Empire medal does come their way now and again.

And how sober the men are! Once in a blue moon we have to deal with a drunk man—really drunk and beastly. Rarely do we see men even at all the worse for liquor. Sometimes a man going back from leave has said good-bye with just one toast too many; sometimes his welcome home has been spirituous or beery a shade beyond discretion. Once we had two splendid Glasgow men, in the Argyll and Sutherland, who were the joy of everybody for the twenty minutes they roared their native songs and shook the very roof with "Annie Laurie." We soon persuaded them that another railway line would take them straight to their own beloved Gallowgate, and we all felt duller when their jovial voices melted away in the distance of the tunnel. The military police were discreet and all was well.

. . . . . .

Here comes a motley crowd—some strangely attired in civilian clothes, evidently brand new—too new to be natural—and others desperately torn, wet, and ragged. The crew of a torpedoed vessel. Those in the new raiment were in night attire when she went down. She was hit twenty miles from the coast at dawn this morning. Here are the men and boys at 10 o'clock at night, after wounds, immersion, rescue, and a long train journey. They are waiting for an official from their London office to take them to some hotel or rest-house for the night. Meantime a Lascar fireman is wheeled up in a barrow. He is dying, they say. He certainly looks like it. His face is green and grey. He shivers like an ague let loose—his eyes are turned up and half closed, and he groans horribly when touched or roused. The Lascar petty officer pours a torrent of furious-sounding foreign words at him with no visible result, then leaves him with a shrug that speaks volumes. Other Lascars look at him and turn away without the least show of any feeling.

The case must be dealt with somehow. A cup of steaming cocoa and a determined effort are brought to bear. After a fierce resistance a little is administered—then a little more. Frantic resistance, and then the last gulp goes down. The truck is run up the steps to the street and away to the nearest hospital. A prompt nurse pushes the stretcher in which he now lies so that the man's feet are against a radiator. Restoratives are given, a doctor called, and the nurse declares he will pull through.

"Coloured men are like that—they collapse. But we've taken him in time. His leg is wounded by the explosion but not badly, and he will do."

Back to the station where, at the buffet, a young English boy, only eighteen—for it is a cadet ship—is trying to thank the ladies for their hospitality. His voice is gone and he looks so ill they remonstrate with him. He was three hours in the water before rescue. He too comes—very unwillingly—to hospital; but it is necessary, for pneumonia threatens.

. . . . . .

Shouts of cheery laughter, and five wheel-chairs, of the sort generally used only indoors, tear round the corner from the street and down the slope on to the station level behind the platforms. Blue-clad figures with felt hats and Australian badges propel the wheels with their hands. One starts a chorus and the others join, and they draw up as near the buffet door as they can steer. Their train does not leave for a quarter of an hour. They came up in these chairs at midday from a suburban hospital, and have been to a music-hall and are on their way home. Had the time of their lives. And among the five men there is but one complete leg. Four of them have suffered double amputations and are legless. Yet the good God gives them high spirits and a courage that does not fail. And surely every one will try to help them. So they are entertained, and away they go to their train, still laughing the music-hall catchwords.

. . . . . .

A crowded train comes in and empties itself. Soldiers with full equipment tramp along in twos and threes. They are making for Victoria Station and the trains to France to-morrow morning. They have all enjoyed their leave—fourteen days was worth coming for. "All the difference" it made to them. And, quiet and calm and as a matter of course, this body of men—farm hands from Cornwall or Worcestershire, mechanics from Birmingham, clerks from offices, servants from big houses, grooms, tradesmen, farmers' sons—in short, the manhood of England—tramps back again from leave to take its share in the grim fight for right and honour against the very powers of evil.

"Remember me, sir? I drove the cart to your place for Mr Phillips, the butcher, every Tuesday!"—and a splendid-looking boy with artillery badges smiled at me. Of course I remembered him. He always had prided himself on taking care of his pony, and we were friends as long as he didn't drive over the grass verges. And of course I will go and see his mother next week when I go home. He is six inches taller than he was when he drove the butcher's cart, and his chest measurement must be many inches greater than it was then—and he is a man among men. How I envy him! He is twenty and I am fifty-nine, and perhaps he understands how I feel.

. . . . . .

Here come half a dozen boys of eighteen on their way to camp to join up. They wander along into the absolutely unknown—quite cheerful but, tired by the journey and totally ignorant as to how much longer it will last or how to continue it aright. Raw lads in cloth caps, no greatcoats, and, wisely, as little civilian raiment as is necessary till they get their uniforms to-morrow. Good luck to them! and may the chances of war spare them to return to their homes! They must be hurried forward so as to catch the last train to their camp to-night.

Back to the platforms. Two

hundred men are to entrain at midnight for the East. They are just marched in, and are sitting on their kits writing or talking, and twenty or thirty letters have to be collected—some have to be put in envelopes and addressed when I get home—and posted. Cheery letters, and full of courage, you may bet; but written with full hearts and tender: and one or two men were grave as they handed them to me to post.

. . . . . .

Here comes another man belated—no train for him till early morning. He had to go to the pay office on arrival from France, and has been delayed. He has a sister in London, and he knows her address. But it is a long way, and the hour is late. Shall I telephone? He hardly likes to, and does not know the number. We find it, and I telephone. I will explain for him. The sister is nursery-maid to the family. By good luck her mistress answers the telephone, and I explain that "George" is here, and that if "Mary" can be spared and could be suitably chaperoned, &c. And it was good to hear over that telephone the call for "Mary" from upstairs, and all the bustle of telling her what had happened, and how she was to hurry to the station at once and be back before midnight if she could, and, if not, somebody would sit up for her. So Mary came, and they had an hour together.

. . . . . .

"His mother" had collapsed on a heap of mail-bags on the arrival platform. She held a folded telegram in one hand and a damp pocket-handkerchief in the other, and the poor thing wept incessantly. "His grandfather and grandmother" hovered over her. It was past midnight. A puzzled porter was trying to explain that there was no particular danger at the moment, and they need not "take on" so. With a rapid movement of relief he turned the whole family over to me and bolted.

The sad telegram explained it all. It had reached a remote Shropshire village that morning. "He"—that is Private James —— of the Shropshire L.I.—was dangerously ill at Camiers, in hospital, and his mother might go at once to France to see him. The nearest police station would provide the railway fare to London if necessary, and had done so.

"And how do we get to France, sir?" asked grandmamma with breaking voice. "Does it take long?"

Gently but firmly I explain that there is no chance of any but his mother being permitted to go, that she must wait till morning to get her papers, and that then everything would be made easy if the telegram directions were followed.

It was quite incomprehensible. Not one of the three had ever been out of Shropshire before. All were firmly convinced that "his mother" could not even get to London, let alone to France, without her parents to accompany her. So they had all come—in haste, without food, terrified of London, incredulous of the

possibility of ever surviving a foreign journey, and broken-hearted about poor James. The Salvation Army provides help and an admirable rest-house in South London. They make every arrangement till the travellers are on the train for Folkestone, from which moment the British Army and the Royal Red Cross conspire to help, forward, and encourage them, taking entire charge until they return them, days later, to the London terminus.

By 12.30 these three adventurers were installed in their hotel. Mother had stopped crying temporarily, and I and the superintendent were suggesting that a more cheerful demeanour would help the patient when she saw him, as well as herself meantime. Grandfather—a village blacksmith by trade—quite cheered up. But granny would not believe mother could go alone. How they settled it in the morning I do not know; but I hope James, poor boy, is mending.

. . . . . .

"I was looking for a train for Cornwall. Perhaps you can tell me? Didn't like to ask you, and wondered what that badge and armlet were for. Very kind of you gentlemen to come like this and help us. I guess it's hard work night after night. No? Well then, about Cornwall, — no — never been there in my life. But I heard a lot about it. Mother came from Cornwall. Father was Scotch. They came out to New Zealand two years before I was born. I like the Cornish fellows I've met—seem hospitable and anxious to have you come there. I've several invitations to farms, you know. I like that. And I was in Scotland last time I was home. Father came from Fife; he was in a grocer's shop in Colinsburgh—small place still; would make you smile to see it. But I liked Colinsburgh, and they remembered father well. Fine place Edinburgh too. I like that Castle standing up there. I like home, but I'll be glad to get back to New Zealand when the war's finished. Oh, well, if you say there's a train to-night I might as well go on it. I was going to-morrow."

So we shake hands warmly, and he goes west to see mother's old home at "home."

. . . . . .

Now a little difficulty. A sergeant has forty-eight hours' leave before sailing for Egypt, and has just come up by train from camp. His wife and the baby have met him, and it is so late there is no train back to their home before morning. Nor have they any friends to whom they can go for the night without warning. It is managed in the end, but one wants a better arrangement for such cases which do arise fairly often. It seems very difficult for women of slender means, and more especially when they are alone, to find a respectable lodging for a night in London. In this case the Salvation Army cleared a room in its admirably appointed soldiers' rest-house (which luckily was not too full, as it easily might have been) and made the little family comfortable.

. . . . . .

"Air-raid warning, sir, London district," whispers the

station inspector as he hurries past me. That entails a long weary waiting for all concerned. Trains run under "air-raid conditions"—*i.e.*, all lights out—for a time. Then all running ceases. Station guides get home after doing what they can for the travelling soldiers—most of whom elect to go to rest-houses at once—as best they may. It is hard on the men to be delayed, and they do not bless the Hun who has followed them across the channel. Yet their patience and temper are extraordinary, and the ready joke helps.

One is proud to belong to them, to be of the same blood, to inhabit the same orderly free land, to know them, to help them even with a trifling direction about a train and to earn their quiet and ready gratitude, whether it comes in a smile and a word or a confidence. It is never voluble, but always apparent. It knows that words can easily overdo it; for, among a rather silent people, words are often embarrassing both to utter and to hear.

It was reserved for a small party of American soldiers to express in speech what we Station Guides all hope is the feeling we inspire when we have learnt our job and are doing it properly. They came in late at night, a non-commissioned officer and six men on their way to Paris, reporting at their embassy in London *en route*. I think they must have been men going to be employed in the H.Q. Office in Paris. They carried each a couple of "grip sacks." I found them on the arrival platform with a little group round them—an inspector and two or three porters and a fellow-traveller or two. The sergeant was clearing his throat, and repeating very slowly and carefully in a Pittsburg accent that would have been remarkable in Broadway—"Cann't yew—tell me—the waye—to the milutairy—check-room?"

Now not one of the listeners had ever heard of a "check-room," and "milutairy," with a long accent on the penultimate syllable, was a new word to them, and in fact they were listening to a foreign tongue.

With evident relief the inspector handed me over the whole problem. It took a little solving, for they were bent on going to the best hotel in the neighbourhood for the night. I asked them to be sure and come back to me if there was no accommodation. I knew that it was unlikely there would be any for seven private soldiers. So presently they returned (the hotel had been quite full!) and surrendered themselves to my guidance. When rooms had been secured by telephone, free transit provided, directions given for their movements next day and their start for Paris in the afternoon, the grip-sacks all stowed in their conveyance, and every one of the six shaken by the hand, then the N.C.O. gripped my hand warmly in his and held it and said—"We are vurry grateful to you, and vurry pleased to have met you. I guess you're a reg'lar 'Open Sesame' over here!"

C. H. B.

H. M. S. ——.

XXIX. GRIT.

THE Captain of H.M.T.B.D. *Upavon* was in a bad humour. He had decided when he left harbour that this patrol was going to be an uninteresting one, as the area allotted to him covered no traffic lane, and was therefore unlikely to hold an enemy within its boundaries. The dulness of a blank horizon had continued to confirm him in his opinion since the patrol began. He spoke from his arm-chair as the First Lieutenant struggled into his oilskins preparatory to going on deck for the First Watch.

"I don't care what courses you steer so long as you work along to the west'ard and keep the alterations logged. Beat across in twelve-mile tacks, and tell your relief to do the same. I'll be keeping the morning, and I'll turn round and work east at six. Got it?"

The First Lieutenant intimated that he had "got it," and, pulling his sou'wester well down over his ears, passed out: he was none too cheerful at the moment himself. The rain had been beating down in heavy streams since dusk, and the long oily swell that had been with them since leaving harbour had, although it had not wetted their rails, made the steady rolling rather monotonous.

. . . . . .

The big tramp steamer might have had a fighting chance if it had not been for the torpedo. It hit fairly abreast her bridge, and two boats at the port-davits broke to splinters above the explosion, while the wireless instruments developed defects that would have taken a week to cure. The Chief Mate never saw the periscope. The explosion, and the sight of a hard white line stretching away to port at right angles to their course, were impressed on his brain simultaneously. It was a few seconds later when he rose shakily to his feet and mechanically set the engine-room telegraphs to "stop." As he did so, the Captain arrived with a rush on the bridge and released him from his post. He hurried below to examine the damage and to fight, by every means possible to seamanship, the great Atlantic waters that he knew must by then be flooding nearly half the hold-space of the ship. Ships have reached harbour with worse damage than she had received, and she might have added another name to the list of tributes to good seamanship had not the enemy risen astern of them to complete his work. A shell hummed over them, skimming the tilted deck from two thousand yards away. The second shell arrived as the tramp's stern-gun fired, and the steamer quivered to a

dull rumbling shock that told of a well-delayed fuse and a raking shot.

The tramp's big propeller threshed along, half out of water, as her Captain rang down for speed with which to dodge and manœuvre; but the vicious shells came steadily home into her, and it was a question only of whether the straining bulkheads forward would go before her stern was blown in. The stern-gun could hardly be depressed enough to get a clear view of its target, and Fritz knew it. The Chief Mate reckoned that it was about the twelfth shell that finished them. Following its explosion, he heard a noise that told him much,—a hissing, rushing sound of air from beneath his feet—the sigh of flooding holds.

There was little time, but they did what they could. The gun's crew, wrestling with a refractory cartridge-box lid, hardly seemed to look up as the tramp sank, carrying them down as so many British seamen have gone down, intent only on the job in hand. In five minutes' time the ocean was clear again save for a half-dozen bobbing heads clustered round a small white upturned boat.

The sea, that from the deck of the tramp had seemed to be only a long gentle swell, now appeared tremendous and threatening. With a cable's length between their smooth crests the big hills came majestically on, giving the numbed survivors glimpses of the empty spaces of the sea at intervals before lowering them back to the broad dark valleys between. For a few minutes the men simply paddled their feet in silence as they clung with unnecessary strength to the life-lines, stern, and stern-posts of the capsized boat—then the Chief Mate called to two of them by name. He gave the white-bearded, semi-conscious figure he supported into their charge and commenced diving, or rather ducking down, under the gunwhale. He was blue with cold and weariness before he gained his object—a heavy eighteen-foot ash oar. The other two men came to his assistance, and between them they succeeded in passing the oar-loom across and under the boat, and in working it about until it caught and held at the far side. It took the Chief Mate a ghastly quarter of an hour before he could climb to the swaying keel, but once there he easily hauled the lighter of his assistants up beside him. With the other man steadying the loom in position, they swung their weight back on the painter clove-hitched to the bending blade. Time after time the oar slipped and had to be replaced, and on each failure the cramped workers panted and shivered a minute before patiently setting to the task again. As they toiled, the send of the swell worked the boat broadside on, and suddenly as they threw back on the line she came sharply over, throwing them into the sea before they could clutch the rising gunwhale with their

hands. Followed an hour of heart-breaking baling with caps and hands, and then one by one the six came aboard—the old Captain, who in the face of active work was recovering consciousness, insisting on being at any rate one of the last three to leave the water.

The Chief Mate collapsed at once across the after-thwart. He had been working with the strength of desperation, and the effort had been great. The others knelt or sat on the thwarts, staring around them as they swung periodically on the crests of the waves in hungry desire for the sight of help. One man faced aft and began swearing, cursing the cold, the Germans, the war, and, in a curious twist of recollection, the ship's cook, who had died twenty minutes before, but who had done so suffering under the accusation of having stolen the swearer's sugar-ration. The Captain rose, steadying himself by a hand on the gunwhale: "Stop that swearing, you," he said; "lay aft here and rummage these lockers. You other hands, muster the gear in the boat and clear away the raffle. Mr Johnson, you and I will bail for an hour; the boat is leaking, and we'll take the first spell. We want warming, I think."

The Chief Mate raised his head from against the thwart —"I can't bale, sir; let the men do it. I'm done."

"Mr Johnson, I'm sixty-five years old and I'm going to bale, and I'm captain of this ship."

The Chief Mate clawed himself up to a kneeling position, and taking a sodden cap from the stern-sheets set feebly to work. As he went on he warmed a little, and the deadly feeling of despair began to leave him. The movements of men about him as they hunted for missing masts and oars roused him at length to an oath at a seaman who lurched against him.

An hour later the dusk closed down, and with two men baling wearily the boat rose and fell to what was undoubtedly a threatening sea, tugging and jerking at her sea anchor. The other four crouched in the stern-sheets, huddled together to find warmth beneath the beating rain.

"If the sail wasn't gone, sir, would you 'ave tried to make land?" A seaman spoke, his cheek against the Chief Mate's serge sleeve.

"I would, Hanson; and if we had two sound oars, I'd use those too," said the old Captain. "But even like this, I'm not going to give in or stop trying."

One of the balers dropped his cap and leaned sideways across the stern-sheets. "Tell 'em the truth, sir," he said. "*I* know, and both you officers know. If we had sails and oars too and a fair wind, we couldn't make land under a week. We'll not live three days in this cold and on this ration, and there's no traffic here. For Gawd's sake stop shammin', an' let's take our medicine quiet."

The Chief Mate swore and started to rise, but the Captain

checked him. "One moment, Mr Johnson," he said, and turned to the ex-baler: "Listen now, my lad; it's not that you're afraid, it's just that you haven't got guts, that's your trouble. I'm an old man and I've got to die soon anyhow, so it oughtn't to matter to me. But I tell *you* that I'm going to work till I freeze stiff on this job, and I'll never stop trying if every one of you does. It's true, there isn't much chance for us, but there *is* a chance, and I won't let go of it. If we were told to come this route, it means some one else may be told to use it. There may be a ship just over the horizon now. I tell you, I don't want some one to pick me up drifting about and say, 'They haven't been dead an hour yet; if they'd used a bit more pluck they'd have pulled through.' No, by God, the man that sank my ship thinks he's finished me, but as long as I can lift a hand I'll try to beat him. I'll sail ships yet in his dirty German teeth, and I'll take you with me in my foc'sle. Now get on and bale till your watch is up."

The man reached forward to the floating cap and without a word continued to use it, ladling the icy water overside in pitifully small quantities. The white-bearded captain subsided again beside the Chief Mate.

The *Upavon* was still rolling heavily as her Captain came on the bridge for the morning watch. She rolled a little uneasily now, and there was a suspicion of a "top" to the seas as they lifted her. The Captain glowered at the crescent moon — having lost none of his ill-humour in the night,— while the Sub-Lieutenant nervously turned over the watch to him.

"And we're to turn east at six, and the First Lieutenant said to be careful to log all alterations——"

The Captain dismissed him abruptly and turned away. As if he didn't know his own orders! Nice thing to be told them by a young cub like that! He would alter round just when he liked, of course. Damn the rain! He'd alter course now and run down before the wind. If those young beggars thought he was going to spend the next two hours facing the rain, they were very much mistaken. Why, when he'd been their age he'd faced more rain than they were ever likely to meet, so — he spoke an order, and the ship came slowly round through ten points of the compass.

"Steady, now. How's her head? South? All right; put that in the log — time, four-twenty . . ."

It was six-thirty, and the dawn and two cups of cocoa had removed a good deal of the Captain's temper. He lit a cigarette and faced to windward to look at the coming weather.

"M'm," he soliloquised; "and it's going to breeze up a bit too. There'll be some breaking seas by noon."

As he was turning to con-

tinue his pacing of the bridge, he started and fumbled for his binoculars. He stared a while to windward, and then, without lowering the glasses, spoke—

"Starboard fifteen, quartermaster. . . . Steady, now. . . . Steer for that white boat on the port bow,—see it? . . . *Messenger!* go down and tell the First Lieutenant I want him; and call the surgeon, too."

XXX. A MAXIM.

When the foe is pressing and the shells come down
In a stream like maxim fire,
When the long grey ranks seem to thicken all the while,
And they stamp on the last of the wire,
When all along the line comes a whisper on the wind
That you hear through the drumming of the guns.
"They are through over there and the right is in the air,"
"And there isn't any end to the Huns."
Then keep along a-shooting till you can't shoot more,
And hit 'em with a shovel on the head.
Don't forget a lot of folk have beaten them before,
And a Hun'll never hurt you if he's dead.
If you're in a hole and your hopes begin to fail,
If you're in a losing fight,
Think a bit of Jonah in the belly of the whale,
'Cause-he-got-out-all-right.

XXXI. FROM A FAR COUNTRY.

Announced by the jangling of the curtain that he had almost brought down with his heavy suit-case, a cheerful, curly-haired officer entered noisily and dropped into one of the Wardroom arm-chairs. He stretched his legs out and, lighting a cigarette, leaned back luxuriously.

"Well?" said a chorus of voices, "*well*—how's London?"

The curly-haired one smiled reminiscently. "Still standing, still standing," he replied. "No place for you though, I'm afraid. You're none of you good-looking enough to pass as Yanks or Colonials."

"Oh, out it out. Tell us what it's like. You know, you're the first one to go there from us for a year, and we want to know."

"What? all about it? All right; chuck a cup of tea across and I'll give you the special correspondent's sob-stuff. *Aah!* that's better; this train-travelling has given me a mouth like —I won't say what. Well, I'll try and tell you what I thought of it and the people that live there. I may say at once that they are civilised to the extent

that they'll take English money without complaining about it, and—*all* right, I'll get on.

"Well, you know, how I went off laden with meat and other cards till I was bulging, and how I reckoned to find people looking hungry at me as if they were reckoning what I'd boil down to in a stock-pot? Well, I've got all these cards still—didn't need 'em. I'd usually left them in my other coat when I got started on meals, and as they've got the trick of camouflaging fish and eggs till you don't know what you're eating, it wasn't worth hunting 'em out. All London seems to live on eggs, and where the deuce they all come from I don't know; they must be using up dumps of them. Oh, and another thing, I'd forgotten that in London they don't grow electric lighters on every bulkhead, and it was lucky I had a few matches with me. The first day I was stopped by fellers wanting a light off my cigarette just three times in a dog-watch, but the other days I didn't get asked at all—I'd lost the country-cousin look, I s'pose. Men? Yes, there's a fair sprinkling there still, but nothing under forty, I should say. Yes, there seem to be crowds of women. Perhaps there are actually more, or it may be that the shortage of men makes 'em look more; but there do seem to be heaps of them. It just made me marvel, too, at the extraordinary lack of imagination the women have. They still wear devilish short skirts, and yet there isn't one in forty of 'em that has a foot and ankle that one could call it decent to show. You'd think they'd see one another's defects and get wise, but they don't. I suppose that now the secret's out about their legs, they reckon it's too late to hide the truth and they face it out; but I'm surprised the young ones don't camouflage themselves a bit and get a fair start. Theatres? Yes; I went through the list, revues and all. I read Arnold Bennett's account of a music-hall—you know the book? Yes, I read it in the train going down. Well, I gathered from his description that things had flashed up a bit since the dear dead days of nineteen-sixteen, and that I would find myself in a hall of dazzling Eastern et-ceteras; but, my word! it was like tea at the Vicarage. I don't know what revue Arnold Bennett found, but I guess I missed it. It's true, I saw one perfectly *reckless* lieutenant drop a programme out of a box into the orchestra; but as the orchestra didn't notice it, and I doubt if the lieutenant did either, it could hardly be put down to riotous conduct induced by drink and sensual music. Oh, I noticed one thing—all the theatre programmes had directions printed as to what to do in case of air-raids during the performance. They had it printed small and sandwiched in between the *hats by Suzanne* and *dresses by Cox* announcements. I liked that. It was British and dignified. I'd like to have sent some copies to Hindenburg. News? Yes, I heard a whole lot, but it was mostly denied in the papers

next morning. It's a queer town for rumours. I think they all live too close together, and they get hysterical or something — like in that Frenchman's book, you know, the 'Psychology of Crowds,' or something like that. They weren't worrying much about the war though. I stopped to look at the tape-messages in the club, and there was an eight-line chit on the board mentioning that the Hun was coming on like a gale o' wind towards Paris, while the rest of the board had eight full-length columns on the latest Old Bailey case, and there was another column coming through on the machine with a crowd waiting for more. No, I'm *not* trying to be cynical. I read 'em all, but I hadn't quite got the London sense of proportion in two days, and it worried me that there was no more war news coming.

"Cost? Yes, *rather*. I've spent whole heaps of bullion, and I'll have to ask the Pay for an advance now. It's quite easy; you just exist and the cash trickles off you. There's not so much of the old 'men in uniform free' or 'half-price to officers' going now. There aren't many civilians left, and I guess *they're* just taking in one another's washing. Everything that isn't a necessity is double price at least, and I believe the shopkeepers would like to make breathing a luxury too. On the whole, I'm glad I only had a few days there. The air's so foul, you know. Mixture of scent and petrol, I think. Oh but, by the way, I saw a hansom—a real hansom—in Regent Street. Quite a neat well-kept one, too. No, nothing new in the way of dresses. Just the same as nineteen-sixteen, as far as I could see. There may have been some good-looking faces among the thousands in the West-end streets, but they were cancelled by the awful legs underneath. I wonder they ever manage to get married. Well, I saw thousands of that kind of female—more than one ever saw before; but I met some others who squared things up in my mind. Ten hours a day and clean the car herself for one, and oxy-acetylene welding eight hours and overtime for another at two-five a week. Doing it to win the War, and not because they wanted to or liked it. Made me feel small to be on leave when I talked to 'em. And then, as I was leaving the hotel, a whole crowd of Swiss porters and servants, that had been fairly coming the Field-Marshal over me for three days, came oiling round me for tips, and pocketed the cash without a word when they got it; and —and—while they were doing it, a Scotch corporal walked past the taxi with three wound stripes on his arm and four notches on his bayonet hilt. It's all a bit too puzzling for me. As soon as I got settled in one impression, I'd get jolted out of it by another. Heigho! I'm not sorry to have gone there to look, and I'm not sorry to be back."

He rose, and moving across the wardroom, flung open the door of his tiny cabin and passed in. His voice sounded hollow through the thin partition. "Hi! outside there—some shaving water *eck dum*," and then a contented murmur —"Lord! but it's good to be home again."

XXXII. THE CRISIS.

When the Spartan heroes tried
To hold the broken gate,
When—roaring like the rising tide—
The Persian horsemen charged and died
In foaming waves of hate.

When with armour hacked and torn
They gripped their shields of brass,
And hailed the gods that light the morn
With battle-cry of hope forlorn,
"We shall not let them pass."

While they combed their hair for death
Before the Persian line,
They spoke awhile with easy breath,
"What think ye the Athenian saith
In Athens as they dine?"

"Doth he repent that we alone
Are here to hold the way,
That he must reap what he hath sown—
That only valour may atone
The fault of yesterday?"

"Is he content that thou and I—
Three hundred men in line—
Should show him thus how man may try
To stay the foemen passing by
To Athens, where they dine?"

"Ah! now the clashing cymbal rings,
The mighty host is nigh,
Let Athens talk of passing things—
But here, three hundred Spartan kings
Shall greet the fame the Persian brings
To men about to die."

XXXIII. A SEA CHANTY.

There's a whistle of the wind in the rigging overhead,
And the tune is as plain as can be.
"Hey! down below there. D'you know it's going to blow there,
All across the cold North Sea?"

And along comes the gale from the locker in the North
By the Storm-King's hand set free,
And the wind and the snow and the sleet come forth,
Let loose to the cold North Sea.

Tumble out the oilskins, the seas are running white,
There's a wet watch due for me,
For we're heading to the east, and a cold wet night
As we drive at the cold North Sea.

See the water foaming as the waves go by
Like the tide on the sands of Dee.
Hear the gale a-piping in the halliards high
To the tune of the cold North Sea.

See how she's meeting them, plunging all the while,
Till I'm wet to the sea-boot knee.
See how she's beating them—twenty to the mile—
The waves of the cold North Sea.

Right across from Helgoland to meet the English coast,
Lie better than the likes of we—
Men that lived in many ways, but went to join the host
That are buried by the cold North Sea.

Rig along the life-lines, double-stay the rails,
Lest the Storm-King call for a fee.
For if any man should slip, through the rolling of the ship,
He'd be lost in the cold North Sea.

We are heading to the gale, and the driving of the sleet,
And we're far to the east of Three.
Hey! you German sailormen, here's the British Fleet
Waiting in the cold North Sea.

XXXIV. RETRIBUTION.

A wonderfully deep-blue sea stretched away to meet a light-blue sky, which was dotted with soft wool-like patches of cloud. There was a slight smooth swell from the south-

west, and the air was cool and salt-laden. Looking from the conning-tower the hull of the boat could be clearly seen as she rose and fell to the waves, the sunlight flashing back steel-blue from her grey side six feet below the surface. It was a day that showed the sea at its best—a high Northern latitude in June and a high barometer producing conditions under which it seemed to be a shame to be at war.

There were two men on the submarine's conning-tower. The smaller of the two was her captain, a fair-haired man with a Prussian name which seemed hardly to fit in with his Norse features. The other man hailed from Bavaria — a tall, thin, large-headed individual, with wide-set eyes and a nose and lower lip that hinted of Semitic ancestry. The big U-boat jogged along at half speed, beating up and down in erratic courses—keeping always to a water area of perhaps ten miles square.

The two officers leaned against a rail, their heads and shoulders twisting and turning continuously as they watched the distant horizon. Each carried heavy Zeiss glasses slung round the neck, and from time to time one of them would search carefully the western sea and sky, his doing so invariably infecting his companion into doing the same. The U-boat was running with a little less than half her normal cruising buoyancy—for speed of diving and not surface speed was the important qualification for her for that day. From the open conning-tower lid came the dull hum of the engines; while as the boat rolled, a shaft of sunlight, shining down the tower itself, sent a circle of yellow light swinging slowly from side to side across the deck beneath the eye-piece of the periscope.

"Is it a big convoy this time, sir?" The First Lieutenant spoke without checking his continual twisting and turning as he glanced at every point of the skyline in turn.

"Yes, it is a big convoy. But there is no doubt of their course or their speed. We shall be among them before the sunset."

"You would not then dive? That is, if you are sure——"

"I do not dive till I am sure. And also we will want all the battery power we have before the dark. Did I not say it was a big convoy?"

"You think there will be a big escort?"

"We will see. I know it will be an escort I do not like to take a chance with."

The Lieutenant fidgeted awhile, his glasses at his eyes. His Captain looked at his profile and at the glint of perspiration on the slightly shaking hands, and yawned. His face as he swung round again to scan the horizon astern looked bored and perhaps a little lonely. A submarine is a small ship in which to coop up incompatible natures, and the terrible losses of personnel in the Imperial submarine service had sadly reduced the standard of officers. He felt sometimes as if he were

an anachronism, an officer of nineteen-fourteen who had miraculously lasted four years. He felt that it had been only the fact that a misdemeanour had caused him to be driven forth to the big ships for two years that had saved him from sharing the unknown fate of his contemporaries. Well, he reflected, it was only a matter of time before he would join them. The law of averages was stronger than his luck, wonderful though the latter had been. He extracted a cigar from his case and reached out a hand to take his subordinate's proffered match-box. As he did so he glanced again at his companion's face, and a sudden feeling of understanding, and perhaps a touch of compassion, made him ask—

"Well, Müller? You have something that worries you. What is it, then?"

The First Lieutenant turned and took a careful glance round the circle of empty ocean. Then his speech came with a rush—

"I want to know what you think, sir. You don't seem to worry about it. I know you can do nothing more—that one can only do one's work as best one can and all that—but I still feel restless. How is it going to end? We are winning? Yes—oh yes, we are winning, but we have done that four years, and how far have we got? Before I came into submarines I believed all they told us, but now I know that we are not strangling England at sea, and that we never can now. What are we going to do next? Is it to go on and on until we have no boats left? Gott! I want to do something that will frighten them—something that will make them understand what we are—something that will make them scream for pity." He paused, gulped, and stared again out to the westward. The Captain straightened himself up against the rail and stretched his arms out in another prodigious yawn.

"My good Müller," he said, "you cannot carry the cares of Germany on your back. Leave that to the Chancellor. One can be sufficiently patriotic by doing one's work and not asking questions that others cannot answer. As to the submarine war—well, blame the men who would not let the Emperor have his way, that hindered him when he would have built an equal fleet to the English. I do not mean the Socialists—I mean others as well. I mean men who grudged money for the Navy because they wanted it for the Army. Curse the Army! If we had had a big fleet we would have won the war in a year, but now—ach! Look now, Müller—you have read Lichnowsky's Memoirs? Yes, I know you are not allowed to, but I know you have. Now I say that what he says at the end is true,—that the Anglo-Saxon race is going to rule the West and the sea, that we shall only rule Middle Europe, and we were *fools* to play for Middle Europe when we might have had the sea. We would now give all the Russias and Rumania and all

our gains just for Gibraltar and Bermuda, for if we had those stations all the rest would come to us. We fight now for our honour, but if it were not for that—and that is everything—we would give our enemies good terms."

"But if that is true—if we can gain no more—we have lost the war!"

The Captain shrugged. "We will have won what we do not want, and lost all that we do; but we shall have won, I suppose. It depends on our diplomatists. If we can get but a few coaling-stations we shall have won, for it would all come to us when we were ready again. But you will not gain a victory by a great stroke as you say you wish, Müller. The war is too big now for single strokes, and the English will not scream for mercy now because of frightfulness. They are angry, and they hate us now."

"But you yourself have sunk a liner, and you showed them as she sank that the orders of Germany must be obeyed."

The Captain's face did not alter at all. "I did do so, and I would do so again. My honour is clear, because I obeyed my orders. Would you have dared to question?"

"No—by God! and I would do it gladly." The Lieutenant's face worked, and he scowled as he glanced astern. "I would wish that every ship of every convoy carried women."

The Captain laughed almost genially. "It is easy to see you are not a Prussian," he said. "It does not matter whether you like or dislike a thing. All that counts is whether or not it is to the advantage of the State. So the Roman World-Empire was made. Myself, I doubt if killing women pays us; there is this talk now of the boycott of Germany after the war. They add time to the boycott for every time we fire on ships that are helpless, and the boycott is to be by sailors. I would laugh at such a threat if it was from any others, but sailors are not to be laughed at. They are likely to mean what they say. It is as I said: if we had fought to the West and to the sea, no man would have dared to threaten us with a sea-boycott now."

"But even with our small Navy we have held the English checked. It is not our Navy that is lacking. What is it, then?"

"It *is* the Navy. It should have been as big as the English Fleet. And the men—Gott! Müller. I tell you, if we had done the Zeebrugge attack ourselves, and I had been there, I would feel that my honour and the Navy's honour was safe, that we could stop and make peace. I would be proud to die on such a service, and I envy the Englishmen we buried when it was over."

"But this is—Herr Capitan, you talk as if you were an Englander——"

The Captain whirled on him, his eyes sparkling dangerously. "*Dummkopf!*" he said. "Report me if you like. I hate the English and I love my Father-

land, but report me if you like. Aoh! You may report me in Hell, too; for I know—I know——"

He stopped suddenly and tilted back his head to listen. The First Lieutenant shrank back from him, his mouth open and his hands feeling for the periscope support. A faint murmur of sound came down wind from the fleecy cloud-banks to the west. The Captain jumped to the opening of the conning-tower and stood, impatient and anxious by the lip, until his lieutenant had slipped and scrambled half-way down the ladder.

Then he jumped down himself, pulling the lid to after him. Simultaneously there came a rush and roar of air from venting tanks, the stern of the boat rose very slightly as her bow-gun went under, and in twenty seconds the submarine was gone, and the bubbles and foam of her passage were fading into the level blue of the empty sea. A minute later she showed a foot of periscope a cable's length away, and a small airship topped the western horizon and came slowly along towards her. The periscope vanished again, and forty feet below the surface the captain watched a gauge needle beside the periscope creep round its dial inch by inch till it quivered and steadied at the forty-metre mark.

"Diving hands only. Fall out the rest. Remain near your stations. Lower the periscope." The First Lieutenant barked out a repetition of each order as the Captain spoke. There was a shuffling of feet, some guttural conversation that spoke of a flicker of curiosity among the men of the crew, and then all was quiet but for the hum of motors and the occasional rattle of gearing as the hydroplane wheels were moved. The Captain moved forward to the wardroom, removing his scarf and heavy pilot-cloth coat as he walked. "Order some food, Müller," he said. "I'm hungry—that airship was farther ahead of them than usual." He threw himself down in a long folding-chair and stretched out his sea-booted legs. "I won't come up to look now until I hear them. Relieve the listeners every half-hour, Müller. I want to have good warning. We should hear a big convoy like this at twenty miles to-day." The curtain-rings clashed and a seaman spoke excitedly as he entered. The Captain nodded and reached out to the table for his coffee-cup. "Just the bearing we expected," he said, "but if they sound as faint as he says there's time to get something to eat first."

It was a big new standard ship which drew the unlucky card in the game of "browning shots." The torpedo hit her well forward, its tell-tale track being unperceived in the slight running swell until too late. A big bubble of water rose abreast the break of the forecastle till it reached deck-level, then it broke and flung a column of spray, black smoke, and fragments skyward. As

the ship cleared the smoke-haze, she was obviously down by the head and steering wildly. Two auxiliary patrol vessels closed on her at full speed, and the nearest freighter increased speed and cut in ahead of her in readiness either to tow or screen. The torpedoed ship, after yawing vaguely for a few minutes, steadied back to the convoy's course, slowing her engines till she only just retained steerage way. There was a rapid exchange of signals between her and the escort vessels, and then an R.N. Commander on an adjacent bridge gave a sigh of relief. "Good man that," he said. "We'll have him in dry dock to-morrow. It hasn't flurried him a bit, and I like his nerve."

The explosion had caused more than the salvage vessels to leap into activity. The white track of the torpedo showed clearly after it had gone home, and the first to take action was a tramp, across whose bows the track passed. The tramp was a ship of the early 'nineties, and her full speed was at the most nine knots, but her skipper at once jammed her helm hard over to steer along the torpedo-wake with a somewhat optimistic hope of ramming. Two destroyers and an armed auxiliary did the same thing, with the result that the tramp skipper found himself suddenly in the cross-wash of the warships as they passed him at a few yards' distance at twenty knots. Somebody on the bridge of one of them screamed a profane warning at him through a megaphone, and the skipper, after a hurried glance at the quivering destroyers' sterns, jumped to the telegraph and stopped his engines. A couple of seconds later his ship shook to a great detonation, and a mighty column of water rose and broke close ahead of him. He starboarded his helm and swung round after the rest of the convoy, his ship shaking to successive explosions as more escorting vessels arrived at the spot where he had turned.

As his torpedoes left the tubes the U-boat captain barked out an order. The attack had been fairly simple, but his hardest problem was only beginning. The boat's bow dipped sharply in answer to the tilted hydroplanes, and she began her long slide down to the two-hundred foot mark. She had got to fifty before a sound like a great hammer striking the hull told them of a successful torpedo-run. The Captain looked up from his watch and smiled. A moment later he was watching the gauges with a grave and impassive face. He knew that the fact of his torpedo hitting would mean greater difficulty for him in the next few hours than he would have known had he missed altogether. At a hundred feet the first depth-charge exploded, smashing gauge-glasses, electric lamps, and throwing a couple of men off their feet. The boat rocked and rolled under the shock, while orders were roared

through voice-pipes for more emergency lights to be switched on. More charges exploded as the boat slid downwards, but each charge was farther away than the last. The half-light of the hand-lamps round the periscope showed the source of a sound of pouring waters—two rivets had been blown right out of the inner hull close before the conning-tower. The Captain shouted orders, and the submarine levelled off her angle and checked at the fifty-metre line, while two men began frantically to break away the woodwork which stretched overhead and prevented the rivet-holes being plugged. At that depth the water poured in through the holes in solid bars, hitting the deck, bouncing back and spreading everywhere in a heavy spray which drenched circuits and wires.

"Müller! where the devil are you? Start the pumps—I can't help it if they hear us. Start the pumps, fool!"

"But you will come up? You will——"

"*Schweinhund! Gehorsamkeit!* Go!"

The pumps began to stamp and clatter as they drove the entering water out again, but above the noise of the pumps the Captain could hear the roaring note of propellers rushing far overhead. If it had not been for those infernal rivets, he thought, he would have been at three hundred feet by now, but he could not risk the extra wetting which a pressure of a hundred and thirty pounds to the inch on the entering water would give to his circuits. The weight of extra water in the bilges was nothing—he could deal with that—though the thought of the six hundred odd fathoms of water between him and the bottom was a thing to remember anxiously in case of his getting negative buoyancy; but if this continual spray of salt water reached his motor circuits it would be fatal. He cursed the men who were vainly trying to block the rivet-holes with wood wedges, and jumping on the periscope table he tried to guide the end of a short plank, intended as a baffle-plate, across the stream. As he stood working, a terrific concussion shook the U-boat from stem to stern. The bows rose till men began to slip aft down the wet deck, and from aft came a succession of cries and shouted orders, "Close all doors! the after-hatch is falling in—Come up and surrender—Lass uns heraus!" The Captain rose from the deck beneath the eye-piece, shaky from his fall from the table. He hardly dared look at the gauge, but he kept his head and his wits as he gave his orders. With the motors roaring round at their utmost power and an angle up by the bow of some fifteen degrees, the U-boat held her own, and as tank after tank was blown empty, she slowly gained on the depth gauge and began to climb. As she rose, she was shaken again and again by the powerful depth-charges that were being dropped on the broken water left by the air-bubble from her after compart-

ment—a surface-mark now a quarter of a mile astern.

Beneath the conning-tower more and more men were gathering, some calm, some white, trembling, and voluble. The boat broke surface with her stem and half her conning-tower showing, then levelled a little and tore along with the waves foaming round her conning-tower and bridge. From inside they could clearly hear the shells that greeted her, and in a moment there was a rush of men up the ladder. Among the first few the Captain saw his First Lieutenant's legs vanish upwards, and at the sight a sneering smile showed on his sunburnt face. The first man to open the lid died as he did so, for a four-inch shell removed the top of the conning-tower before he was clear of it. The escort was taking no chances as to whether the boat's appearance on the surface was intentional or accidental, and they were making the water for a hundred yards around her fairly boil with bursting shell. As the boat tore ahead, holding herself up on her angle and her speed, a few men struggled out of her one by one past the torn body of the first man to get out. Two of them leaped instantly overboard, but the next clawed his way up to a rail, and while others scrambled and fought their way overside, and shells crashed and burst below and around him on water and conning-tower casing, he stood upright a moment with arms raised high above his head. At the signal the firing ceased as if a switch had been turned by a single hand, and he subsided in a huddled heap on the bridge as the riddled submarine ran under. Down below the Captain still smiled, leaning with his elbows on the periscope training-handles and watching the hurrying men at the ladder's foot, until the great rush of water and men, that showed that the end had come, swept him aft and away across the border-line of sleep.

KLAXON.

ESCAPED!

ADVENTURES IN GERMAN CAPTIVITY.

BY WALLACE ELLISON.

IV.

THE Lieutenant who arrested us at Haltern Station was certainly very pleased with himself at our capture. He treated us with great courtesy, and told the soldier who was to take us across to the guard-room to give us double rations of soup, adding, with a significant smile—

"*Sie werden sehen, dass wir noch nicht ausgehungert sind trotz der englischen Blokade.*"

(You will see that we are not yet starving, in spite of the English blockade.)

The guard-room was a wooden hut on the other side of the railway lines, and was the place where the station sentries lived and slept when they were not on duty. It was clean, and contained, at one end, a long wooden bunk with horse blankets, in which the soldiers slept side by side, three tressel-tables with benches, and a big cast-iron stove, which heated the room so thoroughly that the temperature was quite uncomfortably high. We were given a very good soup, identical with the soup which was given to our guards, and chatted quite amicably with the German soldiers who came and went during the day. The corporal in charge of the guard was a pedantic boor, and very different in his attitude towards us from the ordinary soldiers, one or two of whom came very close indeed to expressing sympathy with us in our failure to win through. When we asked whether it was usual, on the actual frontier, to challenge escaping prisoners if they were seen, the corporal growled—

"It may be the rule, but if ever *I* am on duty there, and see any one trying to get over, I shall shoot and shout 'Halt!' afterwards. I have five cartridges in my magazine, and if I miss with the first, I shall not fail to hit with one of the others. I shall take no risks."

Some time after we had eaten our soup, the lieutenant came in, accompanied by a far-away-behind-the-lines official in officer's uniform, who was greeted with respect and almost fear by the soldiers, and addressed as *Herr Inspektor*. He spoke to us in the usual insolent Prussian fashion, much to the evident embarrassment of the young lieutenant, who had been quite palpably striving to play the gentleman. He demanded, with much bounce and bluster, that we should pay for our food, to which request we made no demur, and he seemed, the

whole time, to be determinedly looking for trouble.

He began to discuss the war in its different aspects, laying the blame, of course, on England and her devilish diplomacy, and showed himself absolutely inaccessible to the arguments we did not hesitate to advance, when we became somewhat nettled by his absurd statement of the case. He left shortly afterwards, and we did not see him again. The corporal, who was bubbling over with unctuous respect for his superior's gay uniform, made a perfect salute on his departure.

We had assumed that we should remain in the guard-room until the transport arrived from Berlin to take us back to prison, but shortly after dark the lieutenant appeared again, and apologised for having to send us to the village lock-up. He had tried hard during the day to elicit from us full information concerning the manner in which we had escaped from prison, and also how we had managed to get to a point so near the frontier, but we told him just as much as we thought was good for him, and no more. The two soldiers who escorted us, with fixed bayonets, from the station through the dark village to the village jail, were good fellows, and did not conceal their appreciation of the fact that we had several times had a run for freedom, and also their sincere regret that they were compelled to play a part in taking us back to bondage. When handing us over to the jailer inside the village lock-up, they passed on to him a recommendation from the lieutenant that we should be treated as considerately as was consistent with keeping us in safe custody. After we had had our pockets searched for weapons, and even our penknives taken away from us we were taken along a short corridor, the cell door was opened, and we were shown in. The jailer—a good-hearted fellow, with the slowest-moving mind I have ever encountered (he appeared to live constantly in a state of semi-coma)—brought us a little food before he locked us up for the night.

The cell did not differ, in any marked degree, from what I suppose is the appearance of most cells of the same kind, except for the fact that it was abominably dirty, and the bed was so lousy that I was kept awake for hours at night by what appeared, to my vivid imagination, to be whole regiments of dauntless vermin. In one corner of the room, underneath the heavily-barred window, was a nine-foot pile of bicycle tyres, which had doubtless been confiscated by the authorities some time before, for the sake of the rubber they contained. The only furniture in the place consisted of a hard bed, with dirty mattress and blankets, a wooden, wedge-shaped pillow, a table, stool, and an abominably insanitary convenience. We spent three days in this cell, our only relief coming when we were

occasionally allowed to tend the corridor fire which was supposed to heat the cell. When permitted to do this work we usually lingered over the job as long as we could, before the time came to be locked up again. Whether it was a boon to be allowed to live together or not I do not quite know, for our minds were filled with the galling disappointment consequent upon failure in our enterprise, the prospect of transference to the hell we hated so intensely, and speculation as to the punishment we were likely to receive. During the time we spent in this jail we saw no possibility of escape, though we might have succeeded by some ruse or other had we remained there sufficiently long to make the necessary thorough investigation. Our food was usually passed in to us through a tiny trap-door in the door of the cell, and we were charged for it on leaving the jail.

In the next cell to us was a Russian flight lieutenant, who had been recaptured near the same village after a very plucky and determined attempt to escape. While tending the fire we dropped down the trap-door of his cell, and poking our heads through, endeavoured to carry on a conversation with him, but he spoke no English, no French, and practically no German; and as I knew only about three words of Russian and two lines of a Russian song, whose meaning I did not understand, we were not able to do much more than grin at each other and look sympathetic.

On the morning of the third day the cell door was opened, and we were advised that our guards had come for us. They were a corporal and a private from Berlin, who had been sent specially to escort us back to the prison. We bade farewell to our well-meaning if undesirable host, and leaving the jail, set out for the station, where we took train for Dortmund. Our guards warmed up to us after the first few minutes, and had they not been our guards, would have been quite acceptable travelling companions.

At Dortmund we had to change and wait some time for a train. The soldiers very considerately suggested that we should go into the third-class waiting-room, and there they allowed us to order a meal and drink beer. Our train from Dortmund to Berlin was a corridor express train, and almost full of soldiers. For a short distance we had to stand in the corridor, but later one of the soldiers succeeded in inducing the guard to find room for us. The third-class compartment which he found contained only two vacant seats. For obvious reasons we tried to induce our guards to take these seats, while they, also for obvious reasons, and with more success, insisted that *we* should take them. On taking our seats we found ourselves sitting face to face with a private of the Zeppelin Corps, who, in spite of the notice warning soldiers and

sailors to be guarded in their conversation, was allowing himself to be "pumped" by his fellow-passengers, and was talking as freely about Zeppelins and attacks on England, in which he had participated on three occasions, as though he were talking to his Commanding Officer.

We arrived in Berlin late that night, and were handed over, in the office of the Stadt Vogtei Prison, to the care of the warders whom I had fondly imagined I should never see again. Great was their glee at sight of us once more. We were taken to the worst cells, at the back of the military part of the prison, and locked in for the night.

I threw myself on my hard low bed and slept.

It soon became evident that the punishment to be meted out to us on this occasion was intended to be so harsh in its character that it would act as a deterrent in the case of any of our fellow-prisoners who might be working on similar plans for escape. We were to be allowed no English parcels whatsoever, and our friends were warned that they would be severely punished if they attempted to pass in food to us. The reason why we had been given cells in the back part of the military prison was to make it impossible for our friends to see us or to speak to us. Our cell windows looked down into another yard, where only the German prisoners took exercise. Books were allowed us, and although one's range of choice was very much limited, I found solace in such books as the second volume of Morley's 'Life of Gladstone,' Prescott's 'History of the Conquest of Peru,' 'The Autobiography of Lord Herbert of Cherbury,' Walton's 'Compleat Angler,' and the first portion of 'Don Quixote.' Another book which I read was Gordon's 'Diary in Khartoum.' In one entry, Gordon, referring to the shortage of food from which the besieged suffered in Khartoum, says:—

> "The stomach governs the world, and it was the stomach (a despised organ) which caused our misery from the beginning. It is wonderful that the ventral tube of man governs the world, in small and great things."

It was certainly "that despised organ" which caused my misery, and our failure, on our last attempt to escape.

Apart from these English books, I managed to procure from a fellow-prisoner a number of recently published books, written by German flying-men, submarine commanders, naval officers, and war correspondents, and found them intensely interesting.

Two or three days after our arrival in the Stadt Vogtei Prison, we heard that S——, the ringleader of our little party, had also been captured and brought to the prison. He was put into the cell next to mine, and on the night of his arrival, he, Keith, and I were taken to a room near the prison office to await examination at the hands of *Kriegsgerichtsrat*

(Court-Martial Councillor) Wolff from the *Kommandantur* in Berlin. He was not free to see us immediately, and while waiting for him we were kept together in one room. Wolff, a baptised German Jew, wore on his gorgeous tunic the ribbon of the Iron Cross, which I suspect was conferred upon him for his courage in persecuting the countless poor Polish civilians who had passed through his hands since the outbreak of war. He sat there, smug, fat, and complacent as ever, and, like Sam Weller when he saw the turnkeys who let Mr Pickwick into the Fleet Prison, I reflected upon the immense satisfaction it would afford me to make a fierce assault upon him—if it were only lawful and peaceable to do so. He cross-questioned me thoroughly, his secretary taking down my statement in writing. He showed a most ill-bred curiosity concerning every detail of our escape, and my statement, when I had signed it, no doubt aroused considerable interest among those officers in the Berlin *Kommandantur* who still retained an interest in, and understanding for, the fairy-tales of their childhood. Keith was then called in, the statement was read over to him, and he signed it, with what mental reservations I know not. Keith and I were then taken to our cells, while S—— had to undergo a short examination alone. The following morning we were told by the sergeant that we should be kept in the strictest form of solitary confinement for four weeks, and should be allowed no privileges whatsoever. The lieutenant was determined to see that the punishment meted out to us should be of such an exemplary character that none of the other prisoners would commit the same offence.

It would make an interesting story if I dared relate exactly why we emerged from our five weeks' solitary confinement—it became five weeks instead of four—without loss of weight, but I must refrain.

After we had been in solitary confinement for about a fortnight the lieutenant occasionally came to my cell, accompanied by the warder, when the conversation which took place between us usually ran somewhat as follows:—

"*Guten Tag*, Herr Ellison. Well, how is the prison diet suiting you?"

"Abominably, lieutenant. I am losing weight fast, and feel very slack and weak."

He would look at me with a puzzled expression, while I tried to appear as sad and careworn as possible.

"But you look all right."

"Yes, lieutenant, I may *look* all right, but I know how I *feel*. It is scandalous to give men food like this."

I enjoyed the joke immensely.

Of the men who escaped with us, all except G—— were caught before they had been long in enjoyment of their liberty, and of him we heard no definite news whatsoever. Whether he remained in the country or succeeded in crossing one of the frontiers, or was shot in

trying to do so, I do not know to this day.

S—— had been very incautious in Berlin. One night he telephoned to a lady friend whom the Berlin police were expecting him to visit. The police tapped the wire, and when he arrived at the rendezvous, he was met, not by the lady, but by detectives who were waiting to arrest him. He arrived at the prison wearing a pair of dark-blue spectacles.

Our friend, the proprietor of the gambling-hell, jumped on to the platform of a tramcar in Berlin about eleven o'clock one night, and ran straight into the arms of a policeman who knew him quite well.

"*Guten Abend, Herr R——. Kommen Sie mit,*" said the policeman; and our friend, being a German, and well trained in obedience to authority, came *mit.*

The other man, a corporal in the German army, who rejoined us after he had been at liberty for about six weeks, had been living in the meantime with ladies of doubtful chastity, and told us that on his mother's birthday he could not refrain from going to see her in order to wish her many happy returns of the day. Detectives surrounded the house, his mother pleaded with him not to "scrap" with them, as he said he yearned to do, and he was brought, unresisting, back to prison. Shortly afterwards he volunteered again for service at the Front, and I have no doubt that he was placed in such a position there that his days would be numbered.

We had been put in charge of a warder who had the reputation among his fellows of being particularly punctilious, and even harsh, in the performance of his duties; but he turned out to be a very decent fellow, and did what he could, so far as the regulations would allow, to make our punishment bearable.

The treatment in the prison varied from time to time, as I believe it did throughout every camp and prison in Germany, according to the character of the man who happened to have charge of one at any particular time. It was neither uniformly bad nor uniformly good; and I feel bound to place on record that, on several occasions, we received from certain of the corporals in charge of us treatment as considerate as could have been meted out to us by our own countrymen. Such treatment, though, was rare; and when we experienced it from men who had neither been offered, nor desired, any inducement to treat us well, we appreciated it very highly indeed.

Two days before Christmas 1916 we were released from solitary confinement, and I was allowed to take a single cell in the part of the building where my former fellow-prisoners were interned. Our Christmas was a melancholy festival, but it was as merry a one as we were able to make it. A sort of defiant cheerfulness characterised the attitude of most

of us, and if, deep down in our hearts, there lurked a feeling of black despondency, none of us allowed it to appear on our faces. It was the second Christmas that I had spent in prison, and I resolved that it should be the last. It was the last.

Early in January we all put our heads together, and set to work on still another petition for our return to Ruhleben Camp. We advanced all the old arguments, and perhaps something of our desperation fired the words it contained. To our amazement rumours ran through the prison—rumours which no one seemed able to confirm—that the authorities at the Berlin *Kommandantur* had decided that we should return to camp. We were incredulous. I had long since abandoned hope of ever seeing Ruhleben again, and my mind was constantly at work to find some other way out of the prison, which I felt was destined otherwise to be my home until the end of the war. My health was seriously impaired; my nerves, at times, were in shocking condition; my memory had begun to suffer, and, in spite of all my efforts to be, and remain, defiantly cheerful, there came hours when I was overwhelmed by fits of gloom and despondency, against which I battled in vain. And I was by no means an isolated case. My friends were similarly affected. We grew strangely irritable. The best of friends quarrelled violently with each other, and without cause. We had long since abandoned the little debates in which we used to indulge, in the early days of our prison life. Apart from the fact that each man knew his neighbour's point of view from A to Z, we were none of us in a fit condition to argue good-temperedly. Few of us were able to read books, and we spent most of the day wandering aimlessly about from cell to cell in search of the congenial companion we so seldom found.

Stevenson, in his 'Virginibus Puerisque,' says:—

> "People who share a cell in the Bastille, or are thrown together on an uninhabited isle, if they do not immediately fall to fisticuffs, will find some possible ground of compromise. They will learn each other's ways and humours, so as to know where they must go warily, and where they may lean their whole weight."

So it was with us in our Bastille. When we found ourselves drawn constantly into contact with all sorts and conditions of men, it did not take us long to learn the ways and humours of our friends. We soon discovered men whom it was necessary to avoid. With others we had to walk very warily indeed, lest in their moods of unnatural irritability we should be constantly guilty of offence where none was intended, and long and intimate acquaintance in the case of others taught us indeed that they were men on whom we might lean our whole weight.

Finally came the day when we were informed that the

authorities had decided to send back to camp the Englishmen who were interned in the prison; but, alas! four of us who had escaped from the prison were to be kept behind. We were able to draw slight consolation from the fact that we were evidently considered too dangerous for even this partial release.

The other two Englishmen who were kept behind, apart from Keith and myself, were S—— and W——, who had made a plucky escape about seven o'clock one morning through one of the corridor windows into the street. A certain German, whose name I have forgotten, was interned for a time in the prison, and shared their cell. S—— and W—— had taken compassion on him and had fed him regularly. This German, by way of showing his gratitude for all that they had done for him, told them that when he was released he would take out of prison with him certain articles and foodstuffs which they might require, if they succeeded in escaping, and would declare that they were his own personal effects when his luggage was examined at the moment of his departure. He further invited the two to call for their luggage at his house when they had once made good their escape from the prison. Once clear of the prison, they called upon him, and he was most profuse in his expressions of delight at seeing them. Shortly after their arrival he made some excuse in order to leave the flat, and told them that he would be back within a very short time. What actually happened (and this I have upon absolutely unimpeachable authority) was this: This German gentleman telephoned immediately to the prison office and said—

"As a proof of my patriotism, I wish to inform you that the two Englishmen, S—— and W——, who escaped from the prison this morning, are at my house."

He then gave instructions that they should send and arrest S—— and W—— in such a way that he would not appear to be implicated at all. This was done, and the luckless two were brought back to prison about four o'clock in the afternoon of the same day. I pity the gentleman if either of the two has an opportunity of shaking hands with him after the war.

That parting from our friends was a sad affair. Although we had all lived under the microscope to such an extent, and for so long a time, that the most minute of our faults became magnified in the eyes of our best friends into enormities, it must not be forgotten that the microscope also brought the finer points into relief. Bad as life had been with those men there, we saw before us the prospect of a life indescribably worse when they had gone. We British are not a demonstrative people, and the simple statement that eyes lit up with affectionate regard, that hands clasped tighter and lingered

longer together, will convey a world of meaning to any Englishman who reads these words. For all practical purposes Ruhleben Camp—a bare seven miles away—was more remote than Egypt is from England in times of peace.

S——, when he escaped from prison along with the rest of us, did not attain the end at which he was aiming. He did not, on that occasion, succeed in robbing the police of their prey. He was taken out for trial on one occasion, after his recapture, and—did not return. The wily scoundrel was taken to the police court by a Berlin policeman, and, on the return journey from the court to the prison, succeeded in inducing the policeman to enter a public-house for refreshment. S—— was bubbling over with generosity, and in his eagerness to give the enemy a good time, he made the policeman blind drunk, and at a convenient moment escaped through a lavatory window. A fortnight later a post-card addressed to me, bearing the signature of S——, and posted in Holland, arrived at the prison office, and although I never received the card, I learned that on it S—— informed me of his safe arrival in Holland, told me gleefully that there was plenty to eat there, and very foolishly, in a final sentence, asked me when I intended to join him. For quite a long time after the arrival of this post-card instructions were given to the corporals to keep the strictest possible watch on Keith and myself; and at all times during the day, though particularly just before locking-up time, we found it impossible to get away from two of the corporals, who, in a most clumsy fashion, were endeavouring to disguise the fact that they were keeping careful watch on us.

A Pole, who had a cell looking down into our yard, but situated on the fifth floor—one floor higher than our own—made a remarkable escape from the prison, and, so far as I know, was never recaptured. In some way or other he had secured possession of a small file, and night after night, when the inmates of the prison were asleep, he climbed up to the bars of his window, and filed away at one of the perpendicular iron bars until at last he had filed it completely through. He used to fill up the notch he had made with soap, so that his work would not be discovered by the warders during the day. When the bar was completely filed through, he decided to escape the following night, and by a most ingenious use of various contrivances which he found in his sparely-furnished cell, he made a means of exit from the cell on to the roof. He bent back the bar through which he had filed, and just managed to squirm through on to the zinc window-ledge. He jammed a piece of wood which he found in the cell between the bars and the bricks, so that it formed a convenient ledge, steadied himself on the window-ledge by means of his towel which he had drawn through the top iron cross-piece, and,

stepping on to the wooden ledge he had made, took a firm grip of the brick coping above him and climbed on to the flat roof. As there was a sheer seventy-feet drop below him on to the stone pavement of the yard, it will be clearly seen that this was a feat demanding considerable nerve and coolness. How he escaped from the roof into the street was never discovered, but it is possible that he found his way on to the roof of a series of flats, and thence climbed through an open trap-door into the attic of some house. It was a wonderfully plucky escape.

When spring and summer returned, we were cheered somewhat in our loneliness by the arrival of a few other luckless escapers, who had made a bid for freedom from Ruhleben Camp. New friendships were formed, and our prison life again became a little more bearable. Each man, as he arrived, had a more or less interesting story to tell, and we learned something from each failure.

I believe, in July 1917, we heard reports of the Conference between British and German delegates at The Hague, which was being held for the purpose of discussing the question of the treatment of prisoners of war, and when more details came to hand we learned that the case of such luckless ones as ourselves was also being discussed. At about the end of the first week in August, we learned quite definitely that the delegates and their respective Governments had agreed that those who had already served sentences for attempts to escape should be returned to "conditions of ordinary captivity," and that escapers, in future, were to be punished on recapture with a maximum sentence of fourteen days' solitary confinement, after the expiration of which period they were to be allowed to return to camp.

At the time I had serious thoughts of escaping from prison, but my friends argued —and argued quite rightly— that in view of the fact that so many possible avenues of escape had been closed once and for all by the prison authorities, and that the most thorough precautions had been taken to prevent any further escape from the prison, any attempt along the lines I suggested would mean facing absolutely unwarrantable risks. My eagerness to make the attempt, whatever the risks, was not, in any sense, meritorious; it was the expression of a seething revolt against the injustice of my treatment and the unnatural life I was condemned to lead. There were times when I examined myself, and frankly and quite honestly admitted to myself that I should face the prospect of a quick death at the hands of a shooting-party in the prison-yard with perfect indifference. If I am grateful for anything in my prison life, it is, more than anything else, for the fact that I seldom, if ever, lost "kick"—I can find no better word.

As I expected, the *Kommandantur* in Berlin evidently did all in their power, before

sending us back to Ruhleben, to see if there were any possible way of evading the treaty obligations into which they had entered, and it was not until it was clearly brought home to them that it had been the intention of the British delegates expressly to include in the treaty such cases as our own that they decided to allow us to go back to camp. Almost a full month had elapsed after The Hague agreement came into operation before we were released from the prison, and it was near the end of September when we arrived in camp.

We received a warm welcome from the interned on our arrival. I met scores of friends whom I had not seen for over two years, and found that the camp conditions had changed for the better. My long incarceration in the prison, with the absence of sun and fresh air, along with the depressing life there, had left me very much blanched. An Irish friend came up to me and said, with a laugh:

"Good God, Ellison, you look like a bloody corpse! When are you going to order your coffin?"

"Not yet, Tom, not yet," I answered with a laugh—

The naughty escapers were put into Barrack 14, which had been cleared of all other occupants prior to our arrival. The intention was to keep us there under very strict supervision, and for about a week many of us were unable to sleep at night for the noise of corporals and soldiers tramping through the barrack and examining every bed, every hour, from bedtime to daybreak. If a man happened to be missing from his bed, they awoke the whole barrack in order to get to know where he happened to be at the moment. The camp was given three roll-calls a day—one at half-past seven in the morning, the next at half-past one, and the third at half-past seven in the evening. The first two were held on the race-course, and the evening roll-call took place in the barrack at night.

It was apparent that it was no easy matter to escape from the camp, though many of us had returned with the determination of having a run for our liberty at the earliest possible moment. For a time I thoroughly enjoyed the privilege of strolling about the camp, taking meals with old friends, inspecting the different institutions which had been established, and making new acquaintances. It was like a holiday to me by sheer force of contrast. All the distances in the camp seemed most spacious after my close confinement in the prison, and I revelled in such elementary things as wind, rain, sun, green trees, and the clean young English athletes who were so plentiful in camp. Life in Ruhleben, however, replete as the camp was with opportunities for work and diversion of all kinds, had not been without its effect on many of the interned during my two years' absence. Particularly sad was the marked effect it had had on the minds of some of the fine young boys

whom I had known and liked when the camp was founded. Quite a number whom I saw were suffering from various degrees of melancholia and depression of spirits; but on the whole the men—old and young—were standing the strain remarkably well.

It was some time before I could regain the necessary physical fitness to think seriously of fixing a date for my next attempt at escape. The prison life had had a softening influence upon my physique, and one severe cold after another led me to think, at times, that I should never regain my former physical fitness. The question of internment in Holland was being much discussed at the time in camp, and, along with the rest, I had to undergo a medical examination, in order to see whether I were eligible or not for internment there. I attached no importance, however, to this, preferring to exchange myself rather than await the convenience of official bodies. I felt that it would afford me greater satisfaction to win back to freedom in my own way, rather than wait until I was exchanged. It would have been a sort of anti-climax to my many failures, had I been given my freedom along those lines.

Keith made his final and successful attempt some time in October, along with my friends Armstrong and Kaufmann, and reached Holland within a fortnight, taking train from Berlin by devious routes and walking the rest of the distance to Holland.[1] They wished me to accompany them, but I had resolved that I would make my next attempt absolutely on my own initiative, and I was only waiting until I felt sufficiently well to be able to face any ordinary physical fatigue, and any possible nerve-strain.

I was not at all certain of the quality of my German, but had, for some time, been working very hard at the language, and I felt more confidence in my ability to pass as a German or neutral than I had done at any previous date.

After the escape of my three friends had been discovered, conditions in camp, from an escaper's point of view, became changed for the worse. From nightfall to daybreak the guard around the camp was doubled; the strategic points were carefully studied by the officers, and such precautions were taken to prevent another successful escape that, for a time, the situation appeared almost hopeless. One or two who attempted to escape at night were caught, and sent to prison before they had got clear of the camp. All this gave me furiously to think. I studied the movements of sentries in as unobtrusive a manner as possible, refused to allow myself to be pumped by men who were unduly inquisitive, and when asked whether I intended to escape again or not, usually told the questioner that I felt

[1] Armstrong and Kaufmann had failed on two previous occasions, and were for many months my cell companions in prison.

that I had had enough, and should settle down quietly to some sort of work in the camp.

The result of my reflections was this. I succeeded more or less in putting myself into the place of the German officers, who had determined to make the camp as much escape-proof as possible, and after trying to think, as it were, with their minds, I came to the conclusion that they expected men to escape along certain well-established lines. Once having learned so much, I examined the precautions they had taken to prevent further escapes, with a view to discovering whether I had correctly interpreted the working of their minds or not. I found that I was not wrong in the conclusion at which I had arrived, and that the measures which had been resorted to—effective as they undoubtedly were—were of such a character that they did not make escape impossible, provided only that one decided resolutely to depart from the usual methods of escape. In a word, I arrived at the conclusion that the scheme which offered the most prospect of success was a plan of escape on entirely original lines. I decided that I would do something which the German officers had not dreamed that an escaper might think of doing. Once having made this principle my own, I found that it offered immense possibilities, I discovered quite a number of possible avenues of escape, and almost regretted that the nature of the enterprise demanded that I should restrict myself to one of them.

My motto became, "Do the unexpected!"

I discovered among other things, that most of the precautions taken by the Camp officers were designed to prevent escapes after dark, when most of the attempts were made.

"Very good!" I said to myself. "Then it is quite obvious that I must escape during the day."

Secondly, the usual practice, in the gentle art of escaping, was to avoid meeting the sentries. Again it was perfectly clear to me that if I intended to stick to my motto and do the unexpected, I should have to proceed on quite different lines, and *deliberately place myself in the way of the sentries*—rub shoulders with them if necessary.

From careful and cautious observation of a certain part of the Camp—for obvious reasons I cannot enter into details—I discovered that three sentries were placed in line during the day. Their sentry-boxes were about 150 to 200 yards apart.

I decided that I would watch for a suitable moment, and then climb quickly over the second fence at that part of the camp and drop as quietly as possible between them into the road. My idea then, if I attracted no attention, was to walk brazenly past the one or the other, just as though I were a German civilian out for a stroll. If I felt sufficiently cool I might pass the time of day, in my best German, with one of them. From what I had

learned of the mentality of the German soldier, I felt convinced that he would not expect *that* in broad daylight from an escaped prisoner. It would be quite outside all the rules and regulations he had been taught in his carefully regulated life. I was beginning to enjoy myself beforehand — which was also unexpected. Every prospect pleased me, and only man was vile.

Very carefully and quietly I made the necessary preparations. It would have been very agreeable — and again quite *unexpected!* — if I had been able to take luggage with me; but there were difficulties of transport in the way, and, after all, there was a limit to one's strict adherence to a motto. The high barbed-wire fences would be sufficiently difficult to negotiate without suit-cases; so, regretfully, I decided to carry only what my pockets would hold.

The day arrived.

My overcoat pockets were crammed with all sorts of things, including map, compass, tobacco, pipe, cigarettes, a spare collar, and gloves. As my overcoat was rolled up into a bundle, I had to make sure that my precious belongings would not fall out, by fastening the pockets with safety-pins.

It was a Sunday afternoon about three o'clock, and all was ready. I had chosen this hour because the first football match of the season was being played, and most of the prisoners would be on the grand stand or around the ground as spectators. Three of us made our way, as unobtrusively as possible, to the chosen spot. Two high barbed-wire fences would have to be climbed before I was clear of the camp itself—the first one nine feet high. There then came an intervening space about three or four yards wide, and after that the second and last fence. The second was a wooden board fence about seven feet high, surmounted by two very awkwardly-placed strands of barbed wire along the whole of its length. The barbed wire was attached to iron stanchions which sloped inwardly.

"Is the coast clear?"

"Yes. Now's your chance."

To protect my hands from laceration by the barbs, I wore a pair of old gloves, into the palms of which I had stuffed several folds of stout mackintosh. One of my two friends gave me a leg-up, while my second friend mounted guard. Very few people saw me. A second later I was pivoted on the palm of my right hand on the apex of one of the posts, saw that my clothes were clear of the wire, and dropped lightly down on the other side of the fence. Vanity of vanities! I remember hoping that I *looked* cool, and remember quite distinctly that I didn't *feel* the least bit cool. My coat was flung over, I darted across the intervening space, and crouched down behind some bushes whose foliage I thought was far too thin.

As soon as I was breathing

more or less regularly again, I took a grip of the top of the fence and pulled myself up breast-high in order to ascertain the position of the sentries on the other side. I had decided to take into account only the two on each side of me. The third, on my right, was a considerable distance away, and I trusted to his being too far away to see me.

On my left the coast was clear, but on my right, about one hundred or a hundred and twenty yards away, the sentry was standing in the middle of the road. The sun was in my eyes and I saw the glint of it on the brass of his helmet, but stare as I would I could not see whether his back was towards me or not. By this time my arms and fingers were aching, and I dropped down, darted back to the first fence, and told my friends of my difficulty. One of them volunteered to come over and help me, but I refused to allow him to do so.

I ran back, and just as I was about to pull myself up again I heard the noise of approaching footsteps on the other side of the fence. I crouched down again, listening and waiting. When they were three or four yards past me, on my right, I peeped over the fence and saw a German officer and two ladies going in the direction of Spandau. At first thought it seemed to be sheer madness to go on with my plans, but like a flash my motto came back to me, "Do the unexpected!" If I jumped down behind the officer and the ladies—they were at the moment less than twenty paces from me—the likelihood was that the sentry on my right would have his eyes riveted on his superior, preparing to salute. The chances were that he would not see me at all. I was assuming that the coast on my left was still clear.

Having so placed my overcoat that I should be able to drag it over after me, I climbed up and was almost level with the top of the fence when I felt the stanchion which I held give way. In changing my grip it occurred to me to see if the coast were still clear to my left.

Oh, damn! I was staring straight into the eyes of a German sentry who was standing not more than twenty paces away from me!

I clean forgot my motto and did — the expected; — dashed back to the other fence, flung over my coat, and followed it myself with astonishing agility. As soon as we were clear of the spot and lost in the camp I explained matters to my friends.

About two hours later I tried again, but again narrowly escaped being seen by another German soldier inside the camp before I had an opportunity of reaching the second fence.

I did not try again that Sunday.

Within a week I tried once more with another man, but we were seen again, and had to disappear in the camp in order to escape detection.

It seemed as though I should never succeed.

(To be continued.)

MUSINGS WITHOUT METHOD.

VISCOUNT GREY AND THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS—BARGAINING WITH GERMANY—THE MARQUESS OF CREWE AND LORD BUCKMASTER IN WHITE SHEETS—MR LYTTON STRACHEY AS BIOGRAPHER—THE VICTORIAN AGE—ITS COMPLEXITIES AND CONTRADICTIONS—ITS GREAT MEN—TENNYSON AND DICKENS, DISRAELI AND MATTHEW ARNOLD.

AT the end of all long wars an attempt has been made to confer upon the world the blessings of eternal peace. The sanguine eye of the politician sees in the signing of a peace an excellent chance henceforth to preserve the civilised peoples of the earth in a condition of stable equilibrium. After the treaty of Vienna Metternich and his friends framed the Holy Alliance, the object of which was to make the world safe for autocracy. The Holy Alliance ended, naturally enough, as an instrument of tyranny, and was abolished. And to-day there are some who, having learned nothing from history, would repeat the sad and fatuous experiment. In 1815 the world had suffered from the passions and excesses of a licentious democracy, and a firm and universal autocracy seemed the best remedy. To-day the enemy of mankind is an autocrat, and therefore the world must be made safe for democracy by a League of Nations. We do but change the name and keep the tyranny. If it be imposed by the interference of others, democracy is no less objectionable than autocracy. Those who would club what they choose to call "freedom" into a reluctant people are the mere connivers of despotism.

We had thought that the League of Nations had been put back into the cupboard which holds wild schemes and dead policies. It never found much favour in Europe, where the nations know well the dangers which threaten them from the ambitions of Germany, and now that the Americans are fighting in France, they too understand the risk of bringing the common adversary into a common league. But Viscount Grey of Fallodon is still undismayed, and he has published a pamphlet on the League of Nations which is not likely to convince the waverer. The pamphlet is packed with mildly ingenuous maxims. "The whole of modern civilisation is at stake." "It must be with nations as with individuals; in the great trials of life they must become better or worse—they cannot stand still." "'Learn by experience or suffer' is the rule of life." In other words: be virtuous and you will be happy; a stitch in time saves nine; and for the rest consult the ancient copy-books of our youth.

But Viscount Grey's platitudes do not bring us any

nearer to the League of Nations. They might have been composed by a sixth-form boy in an essay competition, or delivered before a school debating society. They do not face the essential difficulties of the suggestion, or propose a means by which those difficulties should be overcome. To use his own phrase, the League of Nations is one of those "projects that exist in a shadowy form in an atmosphere of tepid idealism, admired by those who see that if possible they would be desirable." And even with these words he seems to overstate the position of the League of Nations. We are convinced that it is not possible. We are convinced also that, were it possible, it would be undesirable.

What, then, are the conditions "that have not been present before and that are present now, or may soon be present, and that are essential," in Viscount Grey's opinion, "if the League of Nations is to become effective"? The first of them is that "the idea must be adopted with earnestness and conviction by the Executive Heads of States." And remember that Viscount Grey will not be content with mere acquiescence. "They must not adopt it," he says of the Heads of States, "only to render lip-service to other persons whom it is inconvenient or ungracious to displease. They must lead, and not follow; they must compel, if necessary, and not be compelled." A survey of the world cannot bring much hope to the mind of Viscount Grey. Here and there in Europe there are furtive signs of lip-service. The words, a League of Nations, is inscribed upon our banners, where it will remain innocuous. They will be repeated, parrot-wise, by half-baked philosophers in search of a nostrum; and when the war is over they will be forgotten, as other sentimentalities will be forgotten, in the onrush of real duties and real problems. At any rate, no single Executive Head of a European State has adopted the idea "with earnestness and conviction." The Americans themselves, having sketched it in the leisure of a long neutrality, are far less enthusiastic in its praise, as we have said, since they have faced the Germans in the field. In whom, then, shall Viscount Grey put his trust? England and her Allies in Europe play with the idea out of deference to "persons whom it is inconvenient or ungracious to displease." The President of the United States has declared it to be his policy, but he is a practical man, and the progress of the war, with the proofs daily renewed of Germany's broken faith and brutality, is not likely to strengthen him in his policy of idealism.

Now the League of Nations, as President Wilson and Viscount Grey envisage it, must include Germany, and here we arrive at the final, insuperable barrier. If Germany is beaten,

as we believe fervently she will be, nothing save a perpetual state of war will persuade her to enter such a League as Viscount Grey proposes. Some suspicion of the truth lurks in his mind. "The military party in Germany," he admits, "are, and must ever remain, opposed to it; they resent any limitation upon the use of force by Germany as fatal to German interests, for they can conceive no development, and even no security, except one based solely upon force." That is perfectly true, and it would be enough of itself, even if all the Allies were agreed upon the League, to make the League impossible. The military party in Germany is at present coextensive with Germany itself. The Kaiser's policy is the policy of his people. The lust of wealth and dominion is universal within his arrogant territories. And before Viscount Grey forces his "tepid idealism" upon the Huns, he must not only break their military power—he must change for ever their hearts and minds. Even if revolution followed defeat, and a wave of Bolshevikism broke suddenly over Germany, even if a provisional government were minded to come into a League of Nations, its accession would be but momentary. The old German spirit would revive: a Scharnhorst would be found to reconstitute the ancient army; and Germany, seeing a whole world leagued for peace, would have a better chance than she had, even in 1914, of dominating the world.

Viscount Grey was for many years our Minister of Foreign Affairs, and he performed the delicate and arduous duties of his office without any knowledge gained by travel or observation of the foreign countries with whose representatives it was his duty to treat. Had he been at the pains, before the War, to visit Berlin, he might have discovered for himself that the Prussian was rigid and unalterable. And he has no ground to believe that even defeat, complete and overwhelming, will change the Prussian's character. It is idle to pretend, as he does, that there will ever be "a conviction in the German people that the use of force causes at least as much suffering to themselves as to others." The discipline of the past will not be relaxed; the pride, stiffer than anything ever yet known to men, will recover after its fall; and the Germans will need to be watched closely in the future, as our democrats — and Viscount Grey among them—never watched them in the past. They will be inspired by one hope, one ambition — to recover what they will have lost; and it will be our business not to chatter about Leagues of Nations, but by controlling the raw materials of the world, to see to it that the Germans shall never again be able to spring upon an unarmed, unready world.

The impossibility, then, of leading a chastened, tamed Germany into a quiet league, should be of itself enough to

condemn the dangerous idea. But Viscount Grey, despairing not of Germany's future, sketches the second step in his argument. He finds it essential to the League's foundation and maintenance that "the Governments and Peoples of the States willing to found it should understand clearly that it will impose some limitation upon the national action of each, and may entail some inconvenient obligation." Were the League not doomed already, this essential condition would condemn it to utter failure. All Governments and Peoples, conscious of their strength and justice, are unwilling to limit their national action, and they will be quite right not to undertake obligations which would be not merely inconvenient but destructive of their freedom. The chief obligation, suggested by Viscount Grey, is fantastic and impracticable. "If any nation breaks the agreement which is the basis of the League," he says, ". . . the other nations must one and all use their combined force against it." He thinks that economic pressure would be very strong, and he forgets that if at the moment of crisis the British democracy clamoured for Free Trade — as clamour it will after the war should Viscount Grey's friend, Mr Asquith, have his way—it will not raise the price of sugar a penny a pound to hinder the ambition of Germany. No; we do not believe that economic pressure could be applied at the right moment by a people still besotted by Cobdenism; and our present Government gives us no assurance that we shall not revert to the ancient practices, which brought us to the verge of ruin, as soon as ever peace is signed. The second obligation, which is to use all the forces available, both military and naval, against the recalcitrant member of the League, can be thought of only in the land of dreams. Modern warfare depends, as we discovered in 1914, in readiness to strike. The nation which had made up its mind to break away from the hampering restraints of the League, would take care to be efficiently prepared. Unless the armies of the League guarded every frontier every day, unless these armies were large enough to keep in subjection any possible alliance, they would be useless for purposes of defence. And if they were kept at the highest standard of practical utility, then all the manhood of Europe would be in the ranks, and the whole world would be and would remain one vast armed camp. Viscount Grey sees plainly that anything less than military intervention is of no value. He does not realise what it would mean if the armies of the League were to stand ready always to intervene. If all the frontiers of Europe were not permanently guarded by infinite series of pill-boxes, one State possibly, two assuredly, could tear the rules of the League to pieces, like scraps of paper, and grab from a sleeping world a defiant hegemony.

The truth is that the League of Nations demands as its first condition — the extinguishing not only of German nature but of human nature. All those that live upon the earth to-day, and all those that ever will be born, must renounce the teaching of tradition, must expel from their veins the blood that courses in them and has coursed in the veins of their ancestors for generations, and must accept in timid acquiescence the new sentiments of obligation and suppression ordained for them by Viscount Grey and others. However, nature may not be expelled, even by foreign ministers. She has an obstinate habit of coming back to plague us, and happily for the future energy and wisdom of the race, the champions of the League of Nations will not be able to exclude her from the earth. They cannot stop the clock of policy. The sleep into which Little Briar Rose fell lasted for a hundred years. Our political philosophers would protract the sleep of nations into perpetuity. And even if they seemed to have their way, they would be foiled at last. The king's son awoke Briar Rose with a kiss. It would be no Prince Charming who would arouse the sleeping world, but a stealthy autocrat fully armed and accoutred, and it will not be with a kiss that he would stir the slumberers to action, but with all the machinery of military science.

The Leaguers of Nations care nothing for the traditions of the race. As they would bind the present, so they would cheerfully put posterity into chains. And what part does democracy play in this pleasant scheme of governing generations yet unborn—democracy, before which we are asked to prostrate ourselves daily in an attitude of unrestrained devotion? What of the miraculous voice of the people, which we are ordered to obey, even if obedience cost us our Empire and all that it inherits? Suppose the sacred people, here or there assembled, presently speaks with another voice? Shall the people instantly feel the thumb-screw of economic pressure, or shall it be attacked, *vi et armis*, by an outraged world, which cares nothing for the divinity of its utterance? These are delicate questions, which some day the democratic high-priests of finality will be urged to answer, and not even their casuistry will help them to find an easy way out.

"Wars are inhuman," said Moltke, who knew something about them, "but eternal peace is a dream, and not even a beautiful dream." Wars are inhuman,—that is a simple truth which no sane man will gainsay. And the war which has devastated Europe for the last four years has surpassed in inhumanity all the wars that ever were before it. But there is a worse thing than war in men and in nations, and that is an obstinately "conscientious" objection to defend oneself. Once upon a time Holland thought that ease and wealth were better worth than self-defence, and she was made the common sport of the nations, handed

from one to another, like a chattel, robbed to pay for the campaigns of strangers, until at last her citizens, refusing to fight for themselves, were ordered out to fight for Napoleon. It is true that then there was no pretence at a League of Nations. But no League would ever give us security—that while we, faithful to our obligations, were lapped in ease, our possible enemies were not highly trained for the fray. In brief, the human race is old and "civilised," and it has never been without wars or the rumours of wars. It cannot be changed in a twinkling of the eye, and if the contemplated change gave us nothing more than added leisure for commerce, if it increased merely our chances of buying in the cheapest market and selling in the dearest, we are not sure that the abolition of war would be a wholesome or a happy end at which to aim.

And think of the responsibility which would be laid upon those who are asked to make the final map of the world, to decide for ever where one sovereignty should begin and another end. It is all very well to soothe the mind with the repetition of those sweet phrases—no annexations, no indemnities, and self-determination. But wherever those phrases have been used they have led to disaster and oppression. And unless we are prepared still to defend ourselves, we shall have no guarantee that our foes, interpreting our lofty sentiments as weakness, will not lead us into our own trap and substitute their own panacea of peace—the eternal domination of the world. If, when the Germans are beaten, we offer them a place in the League of Nations, they may accept the offered place, as they accept naturalisation, with a large reserve. But it is certain they will accept it only because they think that when they have sent us to sleep they may have a better chance than ever of taking a final and a comprehensive revenge. The Allies, as they are constituted to-day, form as efficient a league as we could wish; and if after the war we use the advantages which God has given us to the full extent, if we insist upon keeping a firm hand upon the raw materials which belong to us, we shall have a far better security of a lasting peace than in any chimerical attempt to drive a reluctant Germany, an unregenerate Turkey, a hungry Bulgaria, into the same fold of easy sloth which would contain the rest of us.

Indeed, since the settlement at the congress of peace would be final, we could face it only with despair. The part which England was henceforth to hold in the reconstructed world would be sketched by Viscount Grey or by another politician of his kind, to whom surrender is and has always been the first principle of action. In vain we should look for a guarantee that our essential interests would be safeguarded. On the one hand would be the

Champions of the League, eager to make their dream a reality. On the other hand would be Germany and her friends, cunning enough to put the very highest price on their acquiescence. Give us a piece more here and a piece more there, restore us this lost colony or that, or we won't come in at all. Then the bargain would begin, and since in Germany nobody is so foolish as to hope for a League of Nations, and since the idealism, tepid or cold, has already found its way into our political programmes, the bargain would surely be concluded in Germany's favour. We should be the eager buyers, so to say, they the reluctant sellers. Before the war, as Prince Lichnowsky has told us, there was no price that Sir Edward Grey was not ready to pay for peace. He was prepared to give away what was ours to give and what was not ours with an equal hand. What was called the "African Treaty" was sketched entirely to accord with German wishes. No English interests were allowed to stand in the way of the Kaiser's progress. The French Ambassador made "lively representations," and he made them in vain. In the direction of Baghdad, Prince Lichnowsky's triumph was yet greater, if we may believe his own account. "By this treaty," we are told, "the whole of Mesopotamia up to Basra became our zone of interest," in spite of the fact that through Basra came the supply of oil for our fleet. Whatever Germany wanted was hers for the asking, and no League of Nations was demanded in return. We tremble to think what an accommodating British Minister would surrender to the Huns in exchange for the ideal, which is so highly vaunted to-day and which would surely become worthless to-morrow.

If, then, we once meet the Germans to discuss across a green table the conditions of a League, we shall be utterly ruined, we shall lose at a stroke the fruits of victory. We cannot have faith in the politicians who have betrayed us in the past, and who show no signs that they have come to a better frame of mind. It is not only the danger of Viscount Grey's "tepid idealism" that affrights us—it is the triviality of his argument. If our statesmen can think no more clearly than Viscount Grey, and can write no more persuasively, then our condition is grave indeed. And Viscount Grey has always been accounted a triton among the minnows. He is one of whom all the world spoke well; and even after Prince Lichnowsky's revelations he has been applauded as a peacemaker, instead of being denounced for his carelessness in the defence of British interests. And there is another impossible ideal which lurks behind the League of Nations, and that is the ideal of universal democracies. After the War the democratic principle is to be forced upon all

countries, whether they want it or not. It is the old Victorian belief revived—that the British Constitution should be doled out to all and sundry. The politicians who harboured, and still harbour, these vain hopes forget that the same remedy will not abolish all ills. They forget that in the body politic also that which cures one poisons another. Democracy may not be an evil, if it be sternly safeguarded and practised by those who have learned some lessons of prudent government. In the hands of the Bolsheviks it has meant rapine and murder, such as the fiercest autocrat would shrink from. But politicians are not taught by experience, and the example of Russia is nothing in their eyes. Nor does the British Constitution any longer serve the turn of our idealists. Not even Viscount Grey can recommend to others the form of government which he and his friends have wantonly destroyed. Since 1830 it has been one of the aims of the Radicals to destroy what Mr Gladstone in his ripe age described as an almost perfect constitution. Mr Asquith's Parliament Bill gave it its *coup de grâce*, and the nations of Europe, when they receive at our hands, as we are told they will, a full measure of democracy, will get something which Mr Gladstone himself could hardly recognise.

And now, by a stroke of irony, some of those who did their best to assist Mr Asquith in his evil work are afraid that they have gone too far. In the spirit of the levity proper to politicians, they did not foresee the full effect of their misdeeds, and they stand to-day in the place of repentance. In other words, they demand that the famous debt of honour shall be paid. Having for the purposes of vote-catching done their utmost monstrously to discredit the House of Lords in the eyes of the country, they piously regret that the House of Lords, constituted as it is, has lost the public confidence. How could it retain it after a campaign of falsehood and insolence? However, here we have the Marquess of Crewe, who played his part in the shameful passage of the Parliament Bill, coming forward to admit that, "if when the next General Election took place nothing had been done towards the reconstitution of their Lordships' House, there were possibilities of serious constitutional danger." It is a pity that he did not reflect upon these possibilities before. Confessing that the Parliament Act was never intended to be a permanent measure, a confession which his more stalwart colleagues will not endorse, since nobody believes in the payment of Mr Asquith's "debts of honour," he insists that the Act, if not repealed, should be seriously qualified. Lord Buckmaster is of the same mind as Lord Crewe. He also repents him, too late, of the shameful consequences of his own action. "It is their first duty," says he, "to provide security at home as well as victory in the field.

. . . Their Lordships' House, as at present constituted, will be quite unable to stand the storm that would be raised against its existence by the new electorate." Thus they stand in their white sheets, sad apostles of an aimless revolution, and their repentance is more surprising than their frivolity. In order to pass a measure of Home Rule which was impracticable, to rob a Church which nobody wished to rob, and incidentally to secure Mr Asquith and his friends in profitable offices, these Peers of the Realm connived at destroying the Constitution. And now, overtaken by the results of their own recklessness, they quake in their shoes.

They quake without the sympathy of the Government. Lord Curzon, who, too, played a sinister part in the passing of the Black Act, could hold out no hope to the trembling peers. He did what he always does on such occasions: he laid stress on the grave consequences of delay, and observed that he did not perceive any very general public enthusiasm in favour of the reform of the House of Lords. In the same spirit, he deplored the Franchise Bill "as something much more than a tidal river," as "a flood which they could not stop," and then went home without moving a finger to save the country from submersion. The situation is dangerous, and the arguments of Ministers are disingenuous. The party truce is at an end, we have been told by Lord Curzon himself, and yet the Tories refuse to do the duty for which they were sent to Parliament. They care not for the constituencies which they have betrayed, because these constituencies with their connivance have been overwhelmed in the flood. But when they are asked to help in bringing about "a vast, incalculable, and catastrophic change," they eagerly assent, and attempt to dupe their supporters with the pretence that by so doing they help the war. When it is pointed out to them by repentant Radicals that a strengthening of the House of Lords is a necessary sequel to the Franchise Act, they perceive no desire for this strengthening in the country. But two things are obvious: the Franchise Bill should never have been passed without a measure of reform for the Upper House; and, if nothing be done to remedy the defect before the general election, we shall boast such a constitution as no great country ever boasted — universal suffrage, a single chamber, and a Throne. How long such a constitution will last, before it is overtaken by an inevitable revolution, we do not know. When the crash comes, let us not forget the debt it will owe to our supine Tories.

In the preface to his book, 'Eminent Victorians' (London: Chatto & Windus), Mr Lytton Strachey says that "the history of the Victorian Age will never be written: we know too much about it." Mr

Strachey, at any rate, does not seem to suffer from this disability of knowledge. The acquaintance which he shows with the Age is of the slightest. His papers on Manning and Dr Arnold are mere summaries of well-known books, macerated in the acid of Mr Strachey's mind. They are examples of biography made very easy, travesties of that art which Mr Strachey thinks "has fallen on evil times in England." He at any rate has done little to pick it up.

If in writing about Manning and Arnold Mr Strachey displays a superficial journalism, if he exposes a complete ignorance of Lord Cromer, which has been properly castigated elsewhere, he falls with another kind of fury upon Florence Nightingale and General Gordon. That he should have written about these heroes at all is grossly improper. He is in mind and temperament anti-heroic. He lacks the geniality, the humour, and the talent of the bibulous rascals who, at the end of the seventeenth century, delighted to dress up the heroes of Homer and Virgil in the cast-off coats of the rufflers, to force them to speak the slang of the tavern. But he adopts their method of caricature as well as he can. Since it is impossible that he should understand those who did not refrain from the service of their country, he does his best to make them appear ridiculous. With a kind of zest, he pictures Florence Nightingale bullying Sidney Herbert and forcing Clough to wrap up parcels in brown paper. With an essential commonness—there is always a strain of commonness in his writing—he finds this to say about Gordon: "Now when he was in the mood—after a little b. and s. especially—no one was more capable than Gordon, with his facile speech and easy manners, of furnishing good copy for a journalist." Evidently Gordon has served Mr Strachey better even than he served Mr Stead. He has given him the chance of laughing at the weaknesses of a great man, of throwing a few dregs of brandy and soda in the face of a hero who knew not fear, and died willingly for his country. Obviously it is easier to jeer at courage than to emulate it. Yet General Gordon might have been spared the outrage of Mr Strachey's patronage and denigration.

However, the Victorian Age, about which Mr Strachey thinks that we know too much, still baffles the inquirer. Perhaps, indeed, it would be wise to talk less than we do about Ages and their characteristics. An Age is like a railway station, in which men and women meet fortuitously, are held together by no bond, and intend as speedily as possible to continue their separate journeys. If at a given moment you drove all the travellers into the waiting-rooms, locked the door, and applied the democratic method of the ballot-box, you might find some resemblances of opinion.

But the resemblances would be superficial and largely unconscious. No Age knows either itself or its qualities, and the judgment of succeeding generations is not often trustworthy, because it judges of this Age or that by the great ones who have done it honour. And the great ones are those who rise above the Age into which they are born. They are great because, sharing only the accidental characteristics of their contemporaries, they belong to all time. Gordon and Florence Nightingale, for instance, are Victorian by the hazard of a date. They were as remote from their surroundings as from the Garden of Eden; they might have been born into any century; such qualities as they possessed were all their own and free from the blemish of a prevailing fashion.

The truth is that that which an Age has in common is merely a fashion of speech, morals, or costume, and by this fashion you may detect those who do not rise superior to their environment. The Victorian Age, if we regard its average, was a boisterous, turbulent, and sentimental Age. It was sentimental at all hours and in all classes. It pretended that it was doing good, even at its very worst. It threw itself with a whole heart into politics, and had no doubt that the liberalism of the middle class was a sure means of progress. While Messrs Cobden and Bright thanked God that with the help of women and small children in the factories they were able to compete successfully with foreign nations, Mr Roebuck found an infinite satisfaction in the thought that in England a man might say what he chose, whether it was true and useful or not. The gospel of Manchester was preached in raucous tones from one end of the country to the other, and the reflection that we produced more coal and iron than our rivals seemed to the sanguine a clear proof that we were singled out by Providence for great ends. The Victorians were proud of the machinery of life; they were proud of the Dissidence of Dissent and of the Protestantism of the Protestant faith; and Mr Frederic Harrison, speaking for many thousands, declared that "the man of culture is in politics one of the poorest mortals alive." Indeed he was and is, but he didn't matter so long as Mr Beales might brawl in the street, and there were palings in Hyde Park to be pulled down. The Englishman, noisy and insistent, was ready to believe, as Matthew Arnold said, "that the having a vote, like the having a large family, or a large business, or large muscles, has in itself some edifying and perfecting effect upon human nature." And in this respect the Englishman is Victorian still.

The Englishman of to-day is Victorian also in his childlike belief in machinery. The charge which Matthew Arnold made against his contemporaries may be levelled at ours

with equal truth. "Faith in machinery," said the author of 'Culture and Anarchy,' "is our besetting danger. Often in machinery most absurdly disproportioned to the end which this machinery, if it is to do any good at all, is to serve; but always in machinery, as if it had a value in and for itself. What is freedom but machinery? what is population but machinery? what are railroads but machinery? what is wealth but machinery? what are, even, religious organisations but machinery?" Yet, by a strange paradox, the Victorians, who in their brutal worship of success, commercial and spiritual, seemed to care not a jot for the things of the mind, might boast a larger number of great contemporaries, as we shall presently see, than had smiled upon England since the sixteenth century.

And still the Victorians bustled to buy in the cheapest market and sell in the dearest. Still they shouted that in so doing they were achieving the highest moral purpose. It was part of their turbulence, like their tea-meetings, and their religious feuds, and their fondness for brawling in the street. Above all, they proved their boisterousness in the conduct of their vices. The Victorian Age was the age of the Marquis of Hastings as well as of Dr Arnold, of Baron Nicholson and Trial by Jury as well as of the Metropolitan Tabernacle, of Kate Hamilton's and Evans's and the Hole in the Wall. Men lost fortunes on the turf, and solaced their saddened souls with rough practical jokes. The hero who emptied a sack of rats into a dancing hell enjoyed a success which even Mr Robert Lowe might have envied.

How, then, shall you find a common denominator for such an Age as this, how express it in simple terms? It combined in itself all the elements of contradiction. It was pious and blasphemous: the high-priests of Nonconformity jostled Mr Bradlaugh on the platform. It was cruel and philanthropical: it busied itself with charities; it did its official best to thwart Florence Nightingale in the Crimea; and it bitterly opposed Lord Shaftesbury and Mr Disraeli when they attempted to rescue the over-ridden children from the factories. It was prudish in word and thought as no Age has ever been, yet those of it who chose might listen enthralled to the ribaldries of the Garrick's Head. Even the criminal classes were on the alert to frighten the burgess or to afford amusement to the amateur of crime. The Victorian Age was, in brief, a golden era of the Old Bailey. How shall our tamer times match Orton and Charles Peace, Benson and the corrupt detectives, Wainwright and Palmer? It may be said that these great men condescended to the Age as by an accident, and the Age is not entitled to take credit for them. But even if we omit them from the argument, we must still confess that the Victorian Age was

an age of rough and lawless energy.

Energy, that is its characteristic — energy often misdirected and to wrong ends, but energy restless and unmistakable. The ferment, like the machinery, which the Victorians vaunted, frequently led to nothing, and it seemed inconsistent with the prudish sentimentality which also prevailed. But there it was, and it expressed itself most clearly in the rhetoric, which was the passion of all good Victorians. It was a time of long speeches and long books. Carlyle and Ruskin preached the value of silence in unnumbered volumes. Gladstone solved the problem of packing the minimum of sense into the maximum of words. Even the men of science, with the single exception of Darwin, were rhetoricians as well as patient observers of the truth. Fifty years ago the meetings of the British Association were well-advertised opportunities of eloquence. The sound of Professor Tyndall's peroration at Belfast still echoes in the ears of the devout. "If unsatisfied, the human mind," thus he spoke, "with the yearning of a pilgrim for his distant home, will still turn to the mystery from which it has emerged, . . . then, casting aside all the restrictions of materialism, I would affirm this to be a field for the noblest exercise of what, in contrast with the *knowing* faculties, may be called the creative faculties of man. Here, however, I touch a theme too great for me to handle, but which will assuredly be handled by the loftiest minds when you and I, like streaks of morning cloud, shall have melted into the infinite azure of the past." Is that science, or is it oratory? We do not know; we do know that it is a characteristic piece of Victorianism.

Thus the Victorian Age was an Age of fret and ferment. Not only were men curious about their souls; they were prepared to fight about their souls. Theology flew at the throat of science. Nonconformity was alert to do battle against the Established Church. These impulses were apparent even in the great. But the great were great in spite of them. The tendencies of the Age marked and did not spoil their work. Even though they adopted the prevailing fashions, as women adopted the crinoline, they kept their genius separate and alive. Easily they rose above their environment, and they are judged not by the standard of a time, but by the standard of all time. The characteristics of the Victorians overlaid them superficially. That which gave them immortality was something which went back very far into the past.

And by this accident of great men the Victorian Age will be ever memorable. It was not responsible for them; it held them under no debt; on the other hand, they repaid their nurture a hundredfold. Tennyson, for instance, the greatest poet who wrote when Victoria was on the

throne, owed nothing to his contemporaries save a set of unimportant opinions. To them he seemed a man with a "message." The philosophers, the theologians, and the men of science all claimed him for their own. They were sure that his one and only purpose was to interpret for them their little creeds. When he published "In Memoriam," an undiscerning critic declared that "the author had made a definite step towards the unification of the highest religion and philosophy with the progressive science of the day." Then the politicians laid hold of him, and, until the publication of "Maud," were convinced that his supreme aim was to interpret the creed of middle-class Liberalism. They looked to him to give shape and substance to their own vague hopes of freedom. And their vague hopes are all forgotten. What remains to us is the exquisite poet, alive always to the sights and sounds of nature, quick to transmute into words what he saw and heard—the poet of "Tithonus" and "Œnone," of "Lucretius" and "Vastness," the poet who takes his place with the greatest of all the Ages, with Shakespeare and Donne, and Crashaw and Milton, and Pope and Wordsworth and Keats. Even the "Idylls of the King," moss-grown as they may seem to-day with the sentiment of the Victorian Age, will reveal their beauties afresh to the coming generation, which will care not a jot about the battle of science and theology. Even "The Princess" will presently be purged of its middle-class liberalism, and when the dross is laid bare, the gold will be valued at its proper worth as pure and flawless.

Tennyson was the poet of the Victorians. Charles Dickens was their writer of prose. Let us forget for a moment the wonderful phantasmagoria which was his world. Let us put out of our minds the amazing men and women whom he created out of the vast fertility of his mind and brain, and let us remember that he wrote English as few have ever written it. He was a true master of the English phrase, of the English epithet, of the English word. He had lapses into blank verse—that is true; but when he chose, what Poe said of Tennyson may be said with equal truth of him: "So perfect is his rhythmical sense that he seems to see with his ear." He was so simple that the delicate mysteries and harmonies of human character sometimes escaped him. If you compare his work with that of Balzac, his great contemporary, you might think that now and again he writes like a child, but always like a child of genius. Where Balzac plants his feet upon the rock of reality, Dickens is in fairyland. And yet in fairyland he gathers the truth. In a single caricature he will assemble the threads of universal experience. Crummles is the actor of all time; Podsnap, as he was never young, will never grow old;

Pecksniff resumes in his own person the hypocrisies of all the ages. Dickens's touch with his own Age, his sermons and his theses, will fade away as surely as the philosophy of Tennyson will fade away, and there will be left behind the prose of a man of genius, the fun and fancy of the eternal child. If there is a better story in the range of English literature than 'Great Expectations,' we do not know it. And where between Shakespeare and Charles Dickens shall you find his like?

Above and beyond the Victorians also stands Matthew Arnold, their sternest critic and wisest commentator, great in the wit and irony of his prose, great in the beauty of his verse. And Disraeli, the one imaginative statesman of his time, and the sole master in his kind—the political novel—he too transcends the Age, whose fashions of speech and pose and costume he knew well how to exaggerate. If these are the greatest, how many were there who came not far behind them! Of the poets, Browning and Swinburne—this last a true Victorian in controversy; of the novelists, Thackeray and Trollope, and Wilkie Collins, and the sisters Brontë, any one of them fit to be the glory of an epoch; of the rhetoricians, Carlyle and Ruskin and Gladstone, supreme in verbiage if not in understanding. Here are but a few names which cast a lustre upon an Age which is perhaps too near to us for a full appreciation, and upon which all the sneers of Mr Strachey and others shall never avail to cast a lasting shadow.

Printed by William Blackwood and Sons.

BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE.

No. MCCXXXV. SEPTEMBER 1918. Vol. CCIV.

ESCAPED!

ADVENTURES IN GERMAN CAPTIVITY.

BY WALLACE ELLISON.

V.

Although I stuck to my principle of doing the unexpected, I finally came to the decision to abandon my scheme of escaping along the lines of the three futile attempts described. A most interesting plan was suggested to me by one of my friends, and I took up the idea with enthusiasm.

On Friday, the twelfth of October 1917, I decided that I would escape the following morning, between half-past eight and nine. Most of my preparations were made, and, during the afternoon, I saw to other details which required attention. About six o'clock on Friday evening everything was ready for my escape. The same evening, at eight o'clock, I received, from a reliable quarter, the appalling news that certain plans on which I had been patiently and cautiously working for about eighteen months had gone smash. There was scarcely a vestige of them left, and I was at a loss to know what to do. Should I abandon all intention to escape, or should I, at almost the fifty-ninth minute of the eleventh hour, endeavour to improvise fresh plans and go notwithstanding?

I confided in a trustworthy friend, who was as much concerned as I was at the news I gave him. I was weary of waiting, and finally decided that I would stick to my resolve to escape the following morning, and trust to my wits and good fortune. I confess it was rather a mad thing to do, pitted as one is, in escap-

ing from Germany, against a ruthlessly efficient organisation and a disconcertingly intelligent people; but, as will be seen, although I found myself committed to a whirl of queer and bewildering adventure, luck was with me, and I won through.

I set out, however, with a mind by no means free from concern regarding the ultimate issue of events. But, apart from my determination to adhere to my motto of doing the unexpected, I quite realised that another long term of imprisonment, which would undoubtedly be the penalty I should have to face in the event of failure, would break me mentally and physically, and I therefore determined on this occasion that I would avail myself of every means which circumstances placed in my power. Had I known beforehand how trying my adventures would be, I think I should have hesitated before embarking upon them.

I must refrain, until the war is over, from describing in full detail how I managed to escape from the Camp. It is quite probable that the German authorities know, but I prefer to assume that I am leaving them in ignorance of the actual facts until I can relate all, without running even a remote risk of implicating others.

As I have said, I had determined to play a lone hand, and, added to the knowledge that the odds were heavily against me in any case, there was this additional disquieting circumstance—that an English accent in my pronunciation of German might spell failure at any stage of my enterprise.

I was present at roll-call, on the race-course, at half-past seven in the morning, and, after breakfast, said "So long!" to the friend in whom I had confided, and, with an attempt at a cheery smile, left him. He was one of the two who had helped me on my last three futile attempts, and when I parted from him, I said—

"I won't say good-bye, because it will look d——d silly if the scheme doesn't work after all."

At half-past nine, I found myself at a point facing the Camp (and outside its confines) on the railway-line which runs from Berlin, through Spandau, to Hanover and Holland. I had got rid of a certain disguise in a certain manner, and was dressed in town clothes, which were more or less German in cut.

I must here explain that a straight road, very little frequented by any one except the German Camp officers and guards, runs past the front of the Camp in the direction of Spandau. Opposite the Camp is a series of allotment gardens, a little wider than the road. These allotments are separated from the railway by a wire fence, and alongside the wire fence runs a rough path, which is not supposed to be used except by employés of the state railway. Briefly put, facing the Camp in three parallel lines are a road, the gardens, and the railway-lines. Once on the side of the railway, my cue was to stroll past

the sentries in broad daylight, by imitating, as well as I could, the whole bearing and ways of a Prussian railway official of the higher order—a sort of railway surveyor, who would have the right to walk along the edge of the railway-line unchallenged by any one. I felt that a Prussian official of this type would, by nature and upbringing, be haughty and supercilious in his bearing. Glancing round in the direction of Spandau, I noticed a working-gang of British seafaring men from the Camp, at work unloading parcels on a railway siding about twenty or thirty paces from me. They were accompanied by an armed guard, but I based my hopes that I should escape his attention upon the fact that I was doing something entirely unexpected. It occurred to me that it would be well to practise on my fellow-countrymen, and I eyed these "damned Englishmen" in as haughty and supercilious a manner as I could. Then, turning on my heel, and facing Berlin, I lit a cigarette and strolled away from them along the railway-line. I saw that I had five sentries to pass, who were separated from me only by the width of the vegetable gardens which lay between me and the road. Three of them were on point-duty to prevent escapes, and two others emerged with two working-gangs from the main gates, just as I set out on my trying stroll. Each of the five, I believe without exception, saw me, and one or two of them stood still and stared intently at me. When I saw a sentry opposite me, staring more than was consistent with good manners, I stood before him, eyed him brazenly up and down, while I smoked my cigarette, and varied my tactics by sometimes carefully examining a damaged part of the barbed-wire fence (as though I felt annoyed that the Prussian Railway Administration had had to suffer so much damage at the hands of careless people), stared up at the signal-box—an additional danger—or examined with absorbed interest a set of disused buffers on the side of the line. In this way I got past four sentries. In order to get past the fifth, who stood at the "Tea House" end of the Camp, it was necessary to get through a wire fence on to the road, pass through a railway arch, and walk away from him for a distance of a hundred yards, before I was lost to view. The man was evidently suspicious of me, for as soon as I arrived at the fence which separated me from the road, I found that he had moved into the middle of the road, and was standing watching me intently, at a distance of less than twenty paces from me, his loaded rifle slung over his shoulder. He seemed to be debating in his mind whether he should challenge me or not, and I was wondering what sort of "dressing down" I ought to give him in the event of his challenging me, in order to leave him with the impression that I was a *pukha*

railway surveyor who objected very strongly to being hindered in the carrying out of his duties. I decided, first of all, to stare him out of countenance, which was rather an ordeal; but fortunately his eyes dropped before mine, and, clumsily lifting the strands of wire, I got through the fence pretty much in the way in which I thought a German railway surveyor would. I then turned my back on him, adjusted my coat-collar, lit another cigarette, and, careful not to appear to be hurrying, walked through the railway arch, along the road which ran, at right angles, into the *Spandauer Chaussee*. After I had gone about a hundred yards I turned to the left, and was immediately out of sight of him. I began to feel rather pleased with my motto.

There was no tram-car in sight, and I set off in the direction of Berlin, walking as fast as my feet could carry me, in order to put as much distance as possible between the hated Camp and myself.

The road was lined with trees, and seeing an officer approaching on the left-hand side, I crossed over to the right-hand side before he saw me, and, taking advantage of a slight wind that was blowing, I put up my left hand, ostensibly for the purpose of holding on my hat, but actually for the purpose of concealing my face from him. When he came level with me, I recognised in him the Camp censor. He passed, and I hurried on. A tram-car was approaching me, going from Berlin to Spandau, and I crossed to the other side of the road. I thought that in it I recognised two of the Camp officers. Again, when I saw the tram approaching, I crossed over to the other side of the road.

When I had walked about half an hour, I saw that a tram-car was overtaking me, and I waited for it at a stopping-place. I jumped on, and fortunately remained standing—as one is allowed to do on German trams—on the conductor's platform. I say "fortunately," for I had not been more than a few seconds on the platform when I noticed, half-way inside, sitting facing me, an Englishman from the Camp named Jones, who was reading the 'Berliner Tageblatt.' I knew that Jones had the privilege of going into Berlin on stated days for the purpose of making purchases for the Camp canteen, and my first impulse was to go up to him and quietly have a good laugh over the manner in which I had got past the Camp guards. Then I thought—

"No; he is certain to be accompanied by a sentry from the Camp."

Jones had not seen me, and, glancing round the wooden framework of the door, I saw, sitting opposite to him on the other side of the gangway, one of the German soldiers who belonged to the Camp, in helmet and full uniform. My cue then became to remain unseen if possible, and as Jones was so engrossed in his 'Berliner Tageblatt,' I was able, with the help

of the wooden framework of the door, to stand in such a position that he would not see me. I remembered that I was smoking an English cigarette, and glanced round to see if any one had noticed its peculiar aroma, which is so different from that of German cigarettes. I was relieved to find that it had apparently attracted no attention, and I flung the cigarette into the street.

It became necessary to do a little careful calculation. I assumed that Jones and the soldier would take the tram to a certain tube station, the *Wilhelms Platz*. I also wanted to take a tube from the *Wilhelms Platz* into the centre of the city, but I had already had more of their company than I thought was wise, and decided so to arrange matters that I should be certain of taking the train after theirs. I inquired of the conductress concerning the whereabouts of the *Wilhelms Platz*, which I had never visited before, and dropped from the tram about three hundred yards away from it.

In order to kill time and give the two an opportunity of leaving the tube station before me, I went into a shop to buy cigarettes. The woman seemed to stare at me rather suspiciously, but she allowed me to go, and I took no further notice of the incident. I then strolled in a leisurely fashion to the tube station, took my ticket, and found the train waiting. I walked quite unsuspectingly to the smoking compartment, and just as I was about to enter, found myself again running into Jones and the soldier. Turning back just in time, I entered another compartment.

When, the night before my escape from the Camp, I found that all my carefully laid plans had gone smash, it was a crushing blow to have to face. I felt like a general who had dreamed for months of a brilliant victory, drilled his armies to the highest pitch of perfection, and, just as he imagined himself on the very eve of the realisation of his ambitions, found his armies surrounded and decimated before he had had an opportunity of striking a blow. The friend in whom I had confided, however, introduced me to another man in Camp who was able to give me an address at which I might stay in Berlin. This address, he assured me, was absolutely safe, and I should be able to stay there as long as I liked. But if I find myself mixed up in the next Armageddon in a similar manner, I shall at least know how *not* to act upon the well-meant advice of a friend. It was on the strength of his recommendation that I decided to adhere to my resolve to escape from Camp on the Saturday morning, and when I took the tube from the *Wilhelms Platz* to a certain other part of Berlin, I did so with a view to calling at this address, and remaining there in concealment until I had sufficient time to improvise fresh plans.

I had no great difficulty in finding the house in question when I left the tube station,

but I came out of it ten minutes later in a state of the most abject despair. I had not reached the corner of the street, however, before I found myself humming, half consciously and half unconsciously, "Pack up your troubles in your old kit-bag, and smile, smile, smile!" I had heard this delightful song sung in a Ruhleben Camp *revue* two nights before my escape, and throughout the four weeks and three days which I spent at large in Germany, I found myself involuntarily whistling it in all sorts of queer places. My troubles were plentiful, and I doubt very much whether an old kit-bag would have held them. Still, the song cheered me tremendously.

The address which my well-meaning friend had given me was perfectly useless, and I was fortunate in getting out of the house without meeting the police. I found myself, within an hour of my escape from Camp, without any prospect whatsoever of a roof to my head for that night or any of the succeeding nights which I was bound to spend in Germany before I succeeded in crossing the frontier into Holland. As I walked along the street I pulled myself together, realising the immense importance of appearing in the eyes of passers-by as little like an escaped prisoner as possible. I then reasoned out matters in this wise:—

"It is now eleven o'clock in the morning. At half-past one, at the latest, my escape from Camp will have been discovered. It may have been discovered already, and my pursuers may be hot on the scent at this very moment. I will set to work, however, on the assumption that my escape has not been noticed, and that it will not be discovered until half-past one. That leaves me with a narrow margin of time. I will make immediate use of this opportunity to call at a certain place in another part of the city, where I expect the Berlin police will be looking for me at two o'clock in the afternoon at the latest. When there, I shall be able to learn in a few moments whether the news that I received last night is correct or not. When I know definitely that not a vestige of my plans is left, I shall be able to cut myself adrift from the past, and start with a clear mind on plans for the immediate future. If things are not as bad as I have assumed, all the better, and I will make the fullest possible use of those vestiges of my plans which remain intact."

There was not much time to be lost; so I darted into a tube station, took a ticket for another part of Berlin, and was soon well on my way. I got to the place I sought—partly by tube, partly by cab, and finally on foot, leaving the cab in a crowded street about three hundred yards from the place at which I intended to call. On arrival there, I gave the person whom I sought to understand that I was out from the Camp on leave, and, by careful questioning, elicited information

which confirmed my worst fears.

I felt very despondent. Luck seemed to be dead against me, and I began to debate in my own mind whether it were wiser to go ahead and trust to my wits and good fortune, with the odds so heavily against me, or return to the Camp and accept my punishment, before I became too deeply implicated in a score of unforeseen troubles which, on recapture, would only result in making my punishment all the more harsh.

There are moments when one is led to question whether it is advisable, after all, to undertake an escape alone. One feels an almost overwhelming longing for companionship—not necessarily for some one to talk, or to talk to, but for one who is *there*, sharing the same troubles and cherishing the same hopes. A lone hand, however, is, I am inclined to think, the best of all. The strain is heavier, and seldom relaxes until one has reached the goal; but it has this overwhelming advantage — that the lone man plays his own game, needs to consult no one, and, when he finds himself in a tight corner, can come to decisions rapidly and act upon them at once. In an emergency there is no time for debate. The course of action decided upon may be right or wrong, but it *must* be immediate. There is no time for a consideration of conflicting views, for balancing *pros* and *cons*—the *cons* usually have it! The lone man is "Generalissimo."

While I was in this place talking to this person, and wondering what on earth I could do next, a man came into another room and stared hard at me through the open door. The person to whom I was speaking went to him, and the two talked in undertones for some time. More than once I have had occasion to be grateful, in escaping, for conclusions at which I have arrived — not by any process of reasoning, but by instinct; and on this occasion the conviction flashed through my mind that the man who had entered the other room and had stared at me so intently was a detective. I felt that the game was up. I suspected every one. As they talked in low voices, I strained my ears to the utmost to catch what they were saying, but I could not understand a single word. This strengthened my suspicions. Presently the person came back to me, asked me to sit down, and then returned to the man who had entered and continued the conversation in undertones. Again I could understand nothing. After staring at me again, the visitor left the place, as I thought, to wait for me in the street.

"Who was that man?" I asked, as nonchalantly as I could.

"Oh, only a detective."

I forced a smile as I said—

"Whom is he seeking? Not me, surely?"

"Oh, no! of course not you."

And then the person told me the purpose of the detective's visit.

It was clear that I had had a very narrow escape, as this was one of the very places in which I expected the detectives to seek me, less than two hours later.

"You have not escaped, have you?"

Again I forced a laugh as I said—

"No, indeed not. I am out on leave, as I said before."

Then, glancing at my watch, I pretended to be horrified at the time.

"Good heavens! I must be going. I have squared my soldier to wait for me at such and such a place, and I shall be late if I do not leave immediately. Good-bye."

I went out, wondering what on earth I should say by way of a last attempt at bluff if I met the detective at the door.

On arrival in the street, I found that he was not there; but the street was fairly crowded, and I thought it best to assume that he was somewhere among the people waiting to watch my movements.

"All right," I said to myself; "I will see, at any rate, that I get a run for my money, and give you one as well."

All thoughts of returning to the Camp had vanished of their own accord. Fortune was harrying me at every turn, and my blood was up.

I turned down the first quiet street which I could find, and, choosing only those streets which were little frequented by people, I zigzagged until I had quite lost my bearings. As I turned round one corner, I glanced back along the quiet street, through which I had just passed, in order to make sure that no one answering the description of the detective had followed me. This was an easy matter, seeing that I always chose streets which were not crowded with people. When I felt fairly certain that I had thrown him off the scent, if he were actually following me, I decided to make matters doubly certain by dropping down into a tube station and taking train to another part of the city. I asked my way to a certain tube station of an old man whom I met, and discovered that I had completely lost my bearings. In order to get to this tube station, I had to go along the whole length of the prison in which I had been incarcerated for over two years, and also along the whole length of the Chief Police Station in Berlin. Luckily, I saw no warders, and arrived at the tube station in safety. There, without loss of time, I took a train to the West End of Berlin, and got out at the Zoological Gardens Station.

I was still at large, but the precious freedom for which I had struggled so long and so persistently seemed no nearer than before.

By this time I was hungry, and went into the *Wilhelms Hallen Restaurant*, which I had visited on a former escape, having previously purchased a smart imitation-leather attaché-case, into which I transferred the odd articles I had brought with me from the Camp, and with which my pockets were overloaded. Throughout the remainder of my stay in Berlin, I carried this attaché-case wherever I went, walking about with the air of a twenty-fifth rate commercial traveller. A major, resplendent in his parade uniform, sat at the next table to me, but I took no notice of him, and ordered an expensive vegetable meal which quite failed to satisfy my hunger, but served, nevertheless, to stave off its more acute pangs. Afterwards I visited a number of cafés, and walked along the *Kurfürstendamm* and the *Tauentzienstrasse* — the Pall Mall and Regent Street of Berlin—and did my utmost to ascertain the whereabouts of a certain address which had been given to me by a Russian Pole in prison. Two addresses which I had obtained in this way I had written down on cigarette papers and concealed on my person, with a view to using them in some such emergency. It appeared, however, that this particular address was in one of the most unsavoury slums in Berlin. All the cab-drivers whom I approached refused point-blank to drive me there, mainly, I suppose, on account of the distance. I spoke to one jehu, and asked him to drive me there. He looked me up and down, and then, jerking his thumb over his shoulder at his horse, which was simply a bag of skin and bones, said in his funny Berlin dialect—

"*Wot, mit diesem Hund? Det glaub' ich nit.*" (What! with this tyke? Not likely!)

There was a great shortage of fodder, and I do not remember to have seen one decently fed horse, either in Berlin or in any of the other German towns through which I passed.

The contrast between London and Berlin in time of war is most marked. While there are few indications in London, at the present day, that England is involved in war, apart from the presence of an unusual number of men in khaki and an all-round rise in prices, in Berlin it is impossible to escape from the atmosphere of war. There is much less traffic in the streets than in times of peace. Apart from army automobiles, practically no motor-cars are to be seen in the streets, and the very few which one meets are, on account of the shortage of rubber, furnished with noisy wooden tyres, which are fitted with steel cushion springs between the outer and the inner rim. No bicycles may be used except for business purposes, and the few that are allowed have a type of tyre similar to the one described. By paying through the nose, and producing the necessary coupons, it is still possible to obtain a meal in hotels and

restaurants; but I usually found that I had to have a meal in each of at least two restaurants to satisfy my hunger. The low-class night cafés which used to be characteristic of a certain seamy side of Berlin life are still to be found, but the better-class cafés, such as the Palais de Danse, Maxim's, and the Fledermaus, have been closed by the police.

There is a marked absence in the streets of able-bodied men of miltary age in civilian clothes, and many of the women and children look pinched and hungry. I noticed the effects of the shortage of food more particularly in the case of little children. Tea, cocoa, coffee, and chocolate were unprocurable. The coffee supplied in the most sumptuous Berlin cafés is a concoction brewed from roasted acorns, barley in the husk, or corn, and it is supplied without sugar or saccharine. The hand of war lies heavy on the German people, and wherever I went I heard no sentiments so frequently uttered or so strongly expressed as an utter loathing of war and a fervent desire for peace.

About three o'clock in the afternoon, after many futile attempts to find the address given to me by the Russian Pole, I began to think again that there was something wrong with my luck, and I rashly resolved to put matters immediately to the test. I walked along the *Kurfürstendamm* in search of the most sumptuous café there. I found one without a name, and entered, to find that it had been called, in times of peace, "*Das englische Café.*" I sat down in an easy-chair, lit my last English "Waverley" cigarette, and decided that I would startle the waiter. He came up.

"What will you take, sir?"

"*Bringen Sie mir bitte ein* Whisky and Soda."

He stared at me, with a puzzled expression on his face, and said quietly—

"We haven't got that, sir."

"Haven't you?"

"No, sir."

I then decided that I would ask for something French, and told him to bring me a Hennessy's cognac.

"I think we have a little of that, sir," he replied, and presently brought me a small glass of Three Star brandy, and left me. I sat there for three-quarters of an hour, sipping my brandy and smoking my English cigarette to the end. Neither the aroma of the English cigarette nor the strange thing I had ordered seemed to arouse the waiter's suspicions. When I left the café I felt justified in coming to the conclusion that luck was with me after all—that my star was not as malignant a one as I had feared it must be.

I then set about with more determination than I had previously shown, to find the address which I sought, and, with the help of a chauffeur, who gave me partial instructions, I managed to find the place in the slums of *Alt Moabit*, after a wearisome journey by tram and on foot. I was

not altogether sorry when I found the door of the house banged in my face and locked, before I had had an opportunity of explaining the purpose of my visit. I left to wander a little longer in the streets of that part of Berlin, in the dark and rain, and then, with the future as black before me as ever, I took a tram to the *Potsdamer Platz* in the centre of the city. It was a Saturday night, and there was a great crowd of people.

I needed an opportunity to collect my thoughts, and to decide definitely upon some course of action before it was too late. It was quite out of the question for me to go to a hotel, for I was not furnished with papers, nor had I any luggage, and I had not sufficient confidence in the quality of my German to risk long conversations with any one—at any rate, not until I had become a little more experienced in the art. It occurred to me to visit a café and cinema theatre. In the café I sat among German soldiers and officers for about an hour, examining time-tables, and wondering whether I ought to endeavour to escape from Berlin before midnight. It was essential, however, before I did so, that I should have a more or less clear idea of the lines on which I intended to carry my escape through, and this was not a problem which could be settled in a few minutes. Thinking that I might have the best opportunity of collecting my thoughts in a cinema theatre, where the darkness, to a certain extent, would shield me from too critical observation, I went to the best cinema theatre I could find, and took one of the best seats. I had not been there three minutes before I discovered that the film on the screen was a detective film, in which the particular Sherlock Holmes in question was getting the best of it all the time! Now, I had had enough of detectives for one day; they were beginning to get on my nerves, and, leaving the film-star to track down his luckless victim, I got up and walked out of the theatre into the drizzling rain.

People who knew Berlin well had warned me to steer clear of the *Unter den Linden*, *Friedrichstrasse*, *Leipzigerstrasse*, the *Potsdamer Platz*, *Tauentzienstrasse*, and the *Kurfürstendamm;* but, by some strange cussedness, I found myself, during the three days I spent in Berlin, wandering most of the time along those very streets. If I took a quiet side street in order to get out of one of them, the quiet side street invariably led me into another of the main streets.

By this time I had come to my last card. It was one which I wished to avoid playing if I could possibly do so, but everything else had failed me. It was impossible for me to sleep out. Not only was the weather cold and wet, but there was the more important consideration that I had by this time decided, that I would not endeavour, as one usually does on such an enterprise, to

keep out of sight as much as possible. I would try and disarm suspicion by deliberately placing myself in the way of people, and would try and do everything which the average German, on whom no suspicion rested, might be expected to do. This meant that I could not go about like a vagabond. A clean collar, clean shirt, a shave, and, at any rate, the remains of a crease in my trousers, were quite as essential as cool nerves, and it was therefore necessary that I should find some place in which I could spend the remaining nights of my stay in Berlin with a certain amount of safety. I therefore set out in search of my last address, which was a brothel in one of the lower parts of Berlin. This address, too, I had obtained during my long sojourn in prison, and had treasured it up in my memory for some such emergency. It took me fully an hour to find the exact neighbourhood in which the place was supposed to be situated, but when I came to make close inquiries, I discovered that the number given me did not exist, and I did not dare to make chance inquiries at what might turn out to be quite respectable houses. In my despair, I saw the gaily-lighted windows of a low-class café on the opposite side of the road, and, without a moment's hesitation, walked across and entered.

It was a fairly large café, chiefly frequented by unfortunates, dissipated-looking men, and a few soldiers. I took a seat at a table near the door. Near me, at the next table, was a girl of about twenty to twenty-two years of age, whose smile drew my attention. This caused me to regard her with more care. I was feeling lonely, and it seemed years since I had had a smile from any one. Her features had nothing that was vicious in them. She was rather a pretty girl, with big, blue, melancholy eyes, and, among the loose women who were there, seemed to me to be quite a thing apart. At my invitation, she came to my table and drank coffee with me. We talked, and I had not spoken many sentences before she said to me—

"You are a foreigner, are you not?"

I smiled and said—

"No, I am a German, but prior to the outbreak of war I spent many years in America, hence the foreign accent which is noticeable when I speak German. I came over from America shortly before the outbreak of war, volunteered for the army when war was declared, but was rejected as being physically unfit for military service.

"Oh! that is it," she said. "I thought you spoke with a foreign accent."

Whilst we were talking, I noticed a noisy group of soldiers on a raised dais to my right, all of whom were more or less tipsy. They were drinking *Sekt* (German champagne), and one of them, more tipsy than the rest, was smashing champagne-glasses by flinging them on to the floor as fast as the waiter brought fresh ones. He

then began to stroll about the café, and, feeling that a row was approaching, I thought it wise to disappear before I became involved in it.

I paid the waiter, and my new-found friend and I went out into the dark streets.

Few things in literature have impressed me so much and affected me so deeply as De Quincey's story of Ann and Oxford Street—stony-hearted stepmother—in his 'Confessions of an Opium-Eater.' My situation that night was perhaps more desperate than that of De Quincey when he tramped Oxford Street, friendless and penniless, and met that angelic street-girl, who tended him like a mother and loved him like a sister. But I was older than De Quincey, and the troubles which threatened to overwhelm me had come of my deliberate seeking, so that the advantages from that point of view, at any rate, were heavier on my side. Like De Quincey, I never learned more of my benefactress than her Christian name, and, like De Quincey, however assiduously I may search for her as a free man, to tell her of my gratitude for all that she did for me, I may search and search and never find her. I shall refer to her from this point on as "Ann."

Within a quarter of an hour of first meeting her, when we were away from the café and alone together, I looked at her carefully, and came to the decision that I would confide in her.

"If Ann is to deserve my confidence," I said to myself, "then she deserves my whole confidence, and I will tell her everything about myself, leaving her with the option of informing the police, or helping me in the one or two directions where assistance has become absolutely essential."

"*Fräulein*," I said, "when I told you in the café that I was a German and not a foreigner, I told you a lie."

Her eyes lit up with interest, and I went on—

"I was unable to tell you anything else there, but I am a foreigner. I am an Englishman. I escaped from Ruhleben Camp near Spandau this morning, and escaped with the intention of crossing over into Holland."

While I watched her carefully, the conviction seized me that I had taken the right course, and that my confidence was not misplaced. I never, from that moment on, regretted having told her, and I never once had occasion to falter in the confidence which I placed in her. Never again in my life will I allow to pass unchallenged and unrebuked any sweeping condemnation of the women of her class. Magdalen she may have been, but, for me, she broke her alabaster box of ointment, and discovered depths of tenderness and unselfishness which then and since touched me more deeply than it is in my power to describe. In my memory Ann ranks among the good women of the world.

Through Ann, I managed to obtain an introduction to a gentleman who was a burglar, and something worse. I met

him on the Sunday night in a certain café in a low quarter of the town. Before we met him, Ann said to me—

"I hope you won't mind my having told him that you are a burglar friend of mine?"

I laughed.

"Not a bit. I shouldn't mind in the least, Ann, if you had told him that I was a murderer."

We found the gentleman sitting at a table alone, and I introduced myself to him by clicking my heels together, bowing, and murmuring the name which I had chosen as the most convenient to pronounce.

We were both a little embarrassed at first, but after I had persuaded him that I was one of the same kidney, he warmed up to me.

"Look here, Herr ——," I said, "I have committed a certain crime, but"—here I feigned embarrassment and winked—"if you don't mind, I would rather not go into details."

"Oh, that doesn't matter. One is always willing to help a pal. One never knows when he may need it himself."

"That's very fine on your part," I said. "Now, look here! the police are hot on my heels, and I must get clear of Berlin as soon as possible. I want to go to a certain town"—I gave the name of another town, of course,—"and, in order to be able to get past any of the detectives who may question me in the train, it is absolutely essential that I should have suitable legitimation papers, and those that I have at present are, of course, quite unsuitable for my purpose."

He nodded.

"What sort of papers have you got? If they are what I am seeking, we might come to some arrangement with each other."

He produced his, and eventually I bought them, giving him my word that I would post them to him, anonymously, within three days, after which time they would be of no further use to me. Except for the fact that they were for a younger man, they were exactly what I was seeking. The burglar had been several times rejected by the Army Medical Board as being unfit for military service, and had therefore every right to wear civilian clothes. We went to another house to complete the deal, and when he had left I set about to learn by heart all details concerning the new personality I had assumed. The burglar had had the bad taste to choose a father whose name was unconscionably difficult to pronounce, and I found that he had also been born in some out-of-the-way place which was equally difficult to pronounce. Before we left the café, my friend, the burglar, looked at me and said—

"You are a Swede, are you not?"

I looked at him in amazement.

"Yes," I said; "but how on earth did you discover that?"

"Oh," he answered, "I could tell at once from your Swedish accent."

"That's wonderful," I said. "You must be gifted in that way."

This rather pleased him, and he answered with becoming modesty—

"Yes, I am rather good at that sort of thing. I can always tell a man's nationality from the way he speaks."

More compliments from me.

Ann grew mischievous, and with a twinkle in her eye, which the burglar happily failed to notice, said to him quite seriously—

"Oh yes. An Englishman, for example, would speak with an entirely different accent, wouldn't he?"

"Oh, quite different," answered the burglar.

When everything had been arranged between us, Ann and the burglar began to discuss a certain criminal of their acquaintance who had formerly been one of their set. They described how this man had murdered his mistress and appeared in their midst the same evening as though nothing had happened. They seemed to be greatly impressed by the murderer's *sangfroid*, and I felt it the proper thing to do to express a sort of horrified admiration of his coolness. I am afraid I gave the burglar the impression that such amazing nonchalance as the murderer revealed would be quite beyond my modest powers.

My funds were running low, and I was therefore compelled to decide to leave Berlin earlier than I should otherwise have done. I left by a very early train from the *Schlesischer Bahnhof* on the Tuesday morning.

Ann used to meet me for meals during the day, and during the three days I remained in Berlin, I wandered about the city, visiting different cafés, picture theatres, restaurants, and hotels, frequently sitting in crowded restaurants among German officers and soldiers, doing my best all the time to look as little like an escaped prisoner as possible. The future was still very uncertain, but my plans were maturing.

All this time, Ann did wonders for me.

"Now look here," she would say, "what art thou going to do about thy next meal? Thou wilt have hunger if thou hast no meat to eat. Here are meat coupons, a potato coupon, and a bread coupon. With these thou canst go to such and such a restaurant and get a fairly good lunch. I will meet thee there. No, no, take them. I don't need them at all."

The day before I left Berlin she said to me—

"I have been trying to get thee emergency bread coupons, but I have been unable to do so. With these coupons, however, thou canst go to such and such a shop and buy a quarter of a loaf. At a certain other shop there is a peculiar kind of sausage for sale, without coupons. It is rather expensive, but thou hadst better buy it than go hungry, for the railway journey is a long one. Make sandwiches for thyself with the bread and sausage,

and take them with thee in thy attaché-case."

When I insisted on her taking some of my money, she looked worried and said—

"No, thou wilt have need of it before thou reachest Holland."

I had decided that I would spend the Monday night in a fifth-rate hotel, close to the *Schlesischer Bahnhof*, and that night Ann came along with me, and waited for me in a café, close by, until I had booked my room. I was rather afraid of complications which might arise through registration, as I did not want to use my new name in Berlin, unless I were compelled to do so. Most of the hotels were full, but eventually I found one where a room was free, and when I told the landlady that I should have to leave in order to catch a very early train, she said, to my great relief—

"Oh, well, if you are only staying those few hours, it is hardly worth while to worry about registration."

"Just as you like," I said nonchalantly. "It's no trouble, of course."

"Oh, I don't think we'll bother."

"Right you are," I said. "Good night."

I rejoined Ann later at the café. We walked about the dark streets for a time among the crowds of soldiers and civilians, and then came the moment of parting. Ann looked sadly at me, as the tram which she was to take came to a stop.

"Good-bye, Ann," I said, with a lump in my throat, and tried to put into words the deep gratitude I felt for all that she had done for me.

"Good-bye," she said quietly. "I hope that all will go well with thee. Do not forget to write to me under the name we have agreed upon when thou arrivest safely at a certain town."

I promised, and kept my word two days later. That is the last that I saw of Ann. As I walked back to the inn, I felt inexpressibly sad and lonely.

I left the inn at an unearthly hour the following morning, after a short but sound sleep, and went across to the station, where I bought my ticket for a certain town in another part of Germany, without difficulty. The waiting-room was literally crammed with soldiers going to and from a certain front. There were hundreds of them in full field kit, lying on benches in the corridors, and on tables, chairs, and the floor in the big waiting-room. I stood at the bar among them, and drank coffee, before I left to pass through the barrier to the train.

For reasons of economy, I had taken a third-class ticket; but I noticed, to my dismay, that the third-class compartments were rapidly filling up with soldiers, and, fearing that they might be too talkative for an English escaped prisoner, I decided that I would change into a second-class compartment. I informed the conductress of the train, but it was too late to go back to the booking-office and change my ticket. She said that that

could be arranged on the way. There were one or two other people in the compartment, but I took no notice of them, and settled down to read a German novel that I had bought, which, curiously enough, had the title, "*Ins neue Land*" (Into the new country!) It was only later in the day that the significance of the title struck me. I had taken a slow train in order to avoid control by detectives, and, owing to an accident on the line, we were delayed so long that I was in the train, without leaving it, for over nineteen hours. Six hours of the journey I spent sitting opposite a German officer, who was apparently returning to the front from leave. For a long time he was the only other occupant of the compartment, and I had to maintain a very surly demeanour, lest he should belong to the very unusual type of German officer who is willing to enter into conversation with a chance travelling companion. When we stopped for a long time between stations, owing to the accident to which I have referred, I frequently leaned out of the window and chatted with the girl conductress, and deplored, along with her, the fact that the delay was very hard on the soldiers in the train who were returning home to spend a short leave with their families.

I got into very great difficulties through losing my railway ticket. My conductresses changed about three times. I was going to a station which we will call Y, and at X, the station before Y, late that night, I was still without my ticket, and left the compartment in order to make inquiries of the conductress as to whether she had obtained a transfer ticket for me or not. To my horror, I discovered that the conductress who had taken my third-class ticket was no longer there, and the one who had taken her place, after a moment's consideration, said—

"Oh, that is very awkward. I know now what has happened. The other girl left at Z and took your ticket along with her. When you get to Y, you had better go to the chief station-master and explain the whole matter to him and see what can be done. It is very awkward indeed."

This quite unexpected turn which events had taken worried me a great deal. I knew that my German would not stand the test of long explanations before so astute a railway official as the chief station-master of Y, and I returned to my compartment with a feeling of certainty that I should never get through.

It may be that at times such as these the mind is stabbed awake, as it were, and one seizes hold of possibilities which, under ordinary circumstances, would not occur to one. A railway guard was standing opposite to my compartment, and, judging from the paraphernalia he was carrying, I came to the conclusion that he was going off duty. He had, too, a devil-may-care air which rather pleased me.

"That is my man," I said to myself.

Calling him to me, I explained the whole situation in my best German, and, slipping a tip into his hand, said—

"There's another for you of the same amount if you can only fix up this matter without loss of time when we arrive at Y."

He winked at me and said—

"I will see to that all right, sir."

I pressed him to tell me how he intended to do it, and emphasised the fact that I had had a long journey, was thoroughly tired, and wanted to get to my hotel.

"Above all," I said, "I want to have no fuss with officials. I am too weary for that."

I promised to look out for him at Y, and, on arrival there, soon found him in the crowd which was leaving the train, and passed through the subway with him. I was still very nervous lest he should drag me before some railway official, but evidently this was not his plan. He went to one booking-office after another, and whenever he saw a man clerk there, he turned away. At the last booking-office he found a girl clerk, who looked very tired, and he said to her with a good deal of bounce and bluster—

"Look here! This gentleman, through no fault of his own, has lost his ticket. He has travelled third-class from such and such a place to Y" (mentioning a place about eight miles away from Y, whereas I had come close upon three hundred and fifty miles and had travelled *second-class*). The man's audacity quite took my breath away. "Give him a third-class ticket from such and such a place to Y."

The girl did so. I paid 8d. instead of about twice as many shillings, gave the guard his promised tip, winked at him, and passed safely through the barrier into the dark street.

. . . . . .

During the next four weeks I wandered about a number of different towns, carefully gleaning as much information as possible concerning conditions along the German-Dutch frontier, with a view to ascertaining the most suitable point at which to cross. This time, I was determined to make no mistakes and to do nothing in haste. Most of my nights I spent in little inns in various places, and lived under the guise of seven different nationalities. If the person to whom I happened to be speaking showed extraordinary powers of discernment and guessed that I was a Dane, a Dutchman, or a Swede, I thought it only polite to admit that I was. In my eagerness to be all things to all men (and women), I find that I was, at different times and on different occasions, an Englishman, a German, a German-American, a Swede, a Dane, a Dutchman, and a Dane from Schleswig-Holstein. When I found myself in conversation with a man or woman for the second or third time, it was often puzzling to remember exactly which nation I *did* belong to. In addition to my many nationalities, I had four different names

during the four weeks and three days which I spent at large in Germany.

I passed through some strange vicissitudes, having beforehand resolved to take on anything that came my way. In one inn I soon saw that the people were very short-handed, and in order to ingratiate myself with them, did all sorts of things from washing-up in the kitchen—a hateful business—to making three barrelfuls of *Sauerkraut.* In another inn where I stayed for a few days the landlord came to me one day and asked me if I would help him to kill a pig.

"It's illegal, you know," he said. "We shall be heavily fined and the carcase will be confiscated if the police hear of it."

"Why, of course I will," I answered.

The pig's doom was sealed. We got up very early one morning, waited until the policeman had passed on his beat, and then went with our murderous tools into the pig-sty behind the inn. I felt like a murderer.

"But the old pig will make a terrible row," I said nervously.

"Oh, nonsense! Wait and see!" replied the landlord, unconsciously plagiarising an eminent English statesman.

I carried a huge frying-pan, my function, like that of the fish in "The Death of Cock Robin," being to catch the blood.

Never again shall I be able to look a pig straight in the face. The heartrending cries of that poor beast we so foully murdered haunt me still. It seemed as though all the police in the neighbourhood would be roused by its screams.

"How undignified!" I thought to myself, "to be caught, escaping from Germany, in the act of killing a pig!"

Like a certain illustrious monarch, the pig was an "unconscionable time a-dying," but she did die, and after we had roped the heavy carcase to a ladder, we carried it away upstairs to an attic. My reward came later in the shape of a number of pork chops, and while I ate them I reflected, to my huge delight, on the envy I should arouse in the heart of the average German if he could but see me eating them.

Once I sat in a café, among a crowd of officers and soldiers, at the same table with a man who insisted on telling me, in much too loud a voice, how he had deserted from the German army.

On another occasion I was talking to a Belgian who worked in some factory in the town.

"What are you doing here, Herr ——?" he asked.

"Oh! I've come from Berlin to look for a job."

"Ah, yes. May I ask what sort of job?"

"Oh, certainly. A clerkship, but I want to get a good berth, and intend to have a good look round before I settle down."

He smoked a few of my cigarettes, and then joined a German soldier at another

table. Without any apparent provocation, the soldier began to curse the English with all the epithets at his command.

"Yes, a vile people! a dirty crowd! And poor Belgium! How sorry I feel for Belgium! And all the fault of the English."

"Yes," said the renegade Belgian, "I can stand a Frenchman, a Russian, or even a German, but—an Englishmen—never!"

He little knew.

I very frequently had to sit tight and listen to similar abuse of my own country. Sometimes it was amusing, but usually it was exasperating in the extreme. Occasionally I heard praise of our institutions and of the full measure of liberty we Englishmen enjoy.

The densest, most appalling ignorance prevailed among the common people concerning the motives which had led us to declare war. Jealousy of Germany and of her success as a commercial nation seemed to be regarded as the main if not the sole motive underlying our action. A sinister though skilful press propaganda had attained the ends at which it had aimed.

Deep down, however, in the hearts of many whom I met lurked a black hatred of militarism in all its forms. One man said to me—

"If only the German workman had a bit of backbone, the Prussian Government would not dare to treat us as they do."

The German-Austrian victories in Italy were in full swing, but they seemed to arouse no enthusiasm. Vague rumours of a separate peace with Russia were greeted with more jubilation, but only as the possible forerunner of a general peace.

Every one I met seemed to be hungry, except those who had *Verbindungen* (connections), and were able to pay high prices for illicitly procured supplies. Potatoes were the staple diet, and even these were sometimes unobtainable in sufficiently large quantities. Fat of any kind was almost unprocurable, and I saw people pay with eagerness fifteen shillings a pound for dripping of inferior quality.

I had an almost unrivalled opportunity of judging, and I was very reluctantly forced to the conclusion that there is very, very slight prospect of internal trouble of such a nature as will seriously impede the Supreme Command in the conduct of the war. After the war — perhaps. During the war—exceedingly improbable. Goaded as the masses are, they have no longer left in their hearts the spirit which makes for a successful revolution. And in these times, when a couple of machine-guns can hold a whole crowd at bay, what use are old men, women, and children? They are all that are left. The rest are in the tight grip of the mailed fist and can do nothing.

Seditious propaganda is an impossibility in the army, and a perilous business at home among the civilian populace. The German people, when I

was at large in the country, *were* hungry; they *were* suffering; and I am disposed to the belief that the effects of the privations endured by the civilian populace will be evident to a marked degree in coming generations. But the people are not dying by hundreds in the streets, and it must be borne in mind that, docile as the German people may be, and blind as they undoubtedly are in their obedience to authority, they are also a people of wonderful mettle, steeled to bear hardships with amazing patience, and still doped with the doctrine that they are fighting in defence of their hearths and homes. We stand to lose, and not to gain, by underestimating the fighting qualities of our opponents, and among these qualities capacity for patient endurance among the civilian populace is an essential which ranks not far below the valour of armies.

We must cram down the throats of the Kaiser and the pompous fools behind him the conviction that their mad ambitions have no prospect of realisation. We must smash the idol which the masses of the German people still regard with awe and adoration.

On several occasions I was sitting in the bar-room of an inn, when a policeman came in with what appeared to be a summons sheet in his hand. Sometimes he stared at me, while he questioned the landlord concerning one or other of his guests, and I used to listen with painful anxiety either for my real name or one of the other three which I had assumed. Usually, however, I strolled out of the room as soon as I could conveniently do so, and, once having closed the door behind me, darted into a lavatory, and locked myself in there for twenty minutes, emerging only when I felt reasonably safe in assuming that the policeman had gone.

Many of the strange experiences through which I passed, I must, of necessity, refrain from narrating. Towards the end of the four weeks, I succeeded in making the acquaintance of exactly the kind of man I had been seeking. I cannot tell more of this man than the bare fact that he had done a certain amount of smuggling across the Dutch frontier into Germany, and professed to know every inch of the land on a certain part of the frontier. Had he known my real nationality, I think there is little doubt that he would have handed me over to the police authorities at once. The story I told him, when we first met, was the following:—

"Yes, I am a Dane, but by an unfortunate accident of birth I was born on the wrong side of the Danish frontier in Schleswig-Holstein, and am thus a German by nationality, and liable to serve in the German army. I have kept out of it so far, but the likelihood is that I shall be roped in very soon, and I am determined not to serve, because at heart I am thoroughly Danish. My idea is—if pos-

sible, with your help—to get over into Holland, and from Holland, some way or other, make my way to Copenhagen. My sweetheart lives there, and my idea is to join her in Copenhagen, and live happily there until the war is over."

He shook his head, and regarded me with a puzzled look.

"Now, look here! You are a German, are you not?"

"Of course I am not," I replied. "That is, not at heart. According to my papers, I am a German—in a way—but as far as my real sentiments and sympathies are concerned, I am a Dane. Besides, you can tell that from my Danish accent."

He seemed to be more convinced by this time that my story was true, and we fell to discussing ways and means.

His plan was to leave the train at a certain station not far from the frontier; but, as I pointed out to him, in order to do this, it was absolutely essential that we should both be provided with faultless papers, owing to the fact that we should be travelling most of the time through the so-called *Sperrgebiet* (forbidden territory), and not only should we have to fear control by detectives on the way, but we should also be subjected to very close scrutiny when we passed through the barrier at the station in question. So much I had learned before I met him, and he bore out, from his own experience, all that I said. I finally succeeded in inducing him to procure certain papers for me, and, in the meantime, I went to a shop and had a dozen photographs taken. When I received the papers, I tore off the photograph of the real owner, and succeeded, tolerably well, in replacing my own, and imitating the military stamp on each of its four corners. They were not the papers actually required for that purpose, but I trusted to a certain something on them to carry me through. I was again acting in strict accordance with my motto, and was doing the unexpected.

The night decided upon for our departure arrived. The strain to which I had been subjected during those four weeks and three days had been unusually heavy, and I was glad that the period of waiting had come to an end, and that I had the prospect of action before me.

We took train together at a certain station at night, and travelled to our objective, not far from the frontier. The train was crowded, but at different stations on the way one person after another left the compartment, until we were finally alone together. The smuggler was a very cool fellow, but perhaps on account of the papers I carried, and the fact that he had not done this particular kind of thing before, he was evidently more than a little nervous. I said to myself—

"By Jove! my friend, you *would* be nervous if you knew whom you had along with you."

He had taught me a certain

volley of abuse which I had to hurl at the soldiers on the station, if they seemed inclined to question the validity of my papers, and wished to arrest me.

"My God and Father," I had to say, with as much bounce, bluster, and indignation as I could muster, "I have travelled at least fifty times along this line with these papers, and never had any trouble, and now you stop me! It is too idiotic for words!"

I kept rehearsing all this in German as the train rolled nearer and nearer the station at which we should have to leave the train, and he was not at all satisfied with my pronunciation.

"It's that confounded Danish accent of yours," he said, in despair.

"Oh, that will be all right," I replied, and I would try again, only to be corrected again and again.

"Good heavens," he said, "I hope the train stops before we enter the station. In that event, we will open the carriage door and make a dash in the dark across the lines into the town."

"I am afraid that is unwise," I said, "because, if the station is near Holland, it is almost certain there will be goods trains there from Holland guarded by soldiers, and if they see any one running across the railway lines, they will be certain to take pot-shots at us. Now, look here! don't worry about me. I will give you half a dozen yards' start at the station. You are certain to be able to get through with your papers, and if I get caught, well, I am caught, and there is an end of it. I will swear that I do not know you from Adam. Whatever happens, I will guarantee that you will not be implicated in any way whatsoever."

This seemed to satisfy him a little, but he was still ill at ease.

"But, what if those papers are found on you?"

"Oh," I replied, "that is easily explained. I will swear that I was sitting in a café in X. I saw a man take out those papers and show them to a friend. I wanted papers myself, and on seeing him slip them into his overcoat pocket, which was hanging close to mine, I found an opportunity of stealing them, tore off the man's photograph, put my own in its place, forged the stamp, and—there you are!"

The scheme seemed to satisfy him, and by the time this had been decided upon the train pulled up at the station. I allowed him to get two or three yards ahead of me among the dozen or so people who were going in the direction of the barrier from the train, and saw him pass safely through. With my heart beating uncomfortably fast, I walked up to the barrier, with my legitimation papers in one hand and my ticket in the other. There were two soldiers, armed with rifles and fixed bayonets, and I had to pass between the two. As I handed my ticket to the girl ticket-collector, one of the soldiers made a grab at

my papers, and scrutinised them very carefully. I seemed to pass through an eternity of torment. Then, thank God! he handed them back to me, and I passed through into the dark street with a lighter heart than I had known for weeks.

There I was met by the smuggler, who took me by the arm, and, pressing it to him, said—

"That was splendidly done. Man, you will get a fine welcome in Holland as a German deserter."

"Really?" I said, "that is fine"; and we passed on through the quiet, almost pitch-dark, streets.

We stopped for a little refreshment at an inn in the town, and then set out in the drizzling rain for the frontier itself. We had about two hours' walking before us, before we came to the actual sentry lines, and I have simply a confused recollection of inky darkness, rustling leaves under foot, rain, patches of forest, field-paths, and open heath. The last stretch was across open country, divided into fields by hedges, ditches, and barbed wire. As we approached one hedge, I whispered to my companion that I heard some one moving on the other side. We flung ourselves flat in the wet grass, and listened. Presently we got up, peered round the hedge, and noticed that the noise we thought was made by a sentry came from a number of cows that were lying in the field. We went on.

It was close upon midnight, on the 13th of November 1917, when we came level with the last line of sentries. They were posted along a canal, which, I believe, although I am not certain, was the actual frontier. As Holland lay before me, and as all that remained to be done depended on my own initiative and resource, there was no point in taking my companion farther. I agreed to crouch in the darkness on the banks of the canal until he had got back into safety, and as soon as I could no longer hear or see him, I dropped into the slime and water, and waded, as cautiously as I could, into the middle. I expected to have to swim, but it only took me up to my armpits. Keeping my eyes fixed on a group of pollard willows on the opposite bank of the canal, I made for them, going as slowly, and making as little noise as possible. When I got to the other bank, I rose out of the canal inch by inch, so that the water dripping from my clothes should not make so loud a noise as would attract the attention of any sentry who might be near me in the darkness. I learned later that many men had been shot, trying to cross not far from there.

Once on the opposite bank, I stood close to this clump of trees until some of the water had dripped from me, and then, feeling as though I were clothed in a suit of lead, ran, as fast as my legs could carry me, across an open field.

Was this Holland? or was I still in Germany? I decided, in any event, to proceed for a time with the utmost caution.

There were no stars by means of which I might have found my right direction, so, flinging myself flat on the wet ground, I took out my compass with a view to striking a direction due north, which would have taken me deeper and deeper into Holland. To my dismay, I found that my compass had become flooded. My intention had been to go through the canal with the compass in my mouth, but I had been too eager to reach the Promised Land, and, in my eagerness, had forgotten this very necessary precaution. In my despair, I talked to it like an animate being. I held it still, I tapped it, I shook it, but in vain. The needle would not move. There were no stars visible. There was no moon. No village lights were there ahead to help me. Already, I was shivering with cold in my soaking clothes. Obviously, the only thing to do was to keep on the move. But where? In which direction? Anywhere. Anywhere. But God forbid that I should walk blindly back into Germany. Anywhere but there.

I began to walk, as I thought, in a direction at right angles to the canal I had crossed. Sometimes I came to an impenetrable hedge, or a patch of bog, or a broad ditch, and, in skirting it, completely lost my sense of direction. Three times I found myself back on the banks of the canal, on the other side of which the German sentries were posted, and realised, as I peered into the water, that I had walked in a rough semi-circle back to the point from which I had started.

Good God! was I after all doomed to failure so near the goal? Were three years of persistent effort to escape about to end in my walking blindly back into Germany, after I had trod the soil of the country which had so long been the object of my yearning?

I was strangely calm. The heaviest strain is felt in waiting to do things, not in doing them.

How long I walked I know not, but I suddenly found myself in front of a farm-house, which loomed up before me out of the almost tangible darkness. At last I had found a habitation. Its architecture seemed at any rate un-German. Would the people turn out to be German or Dutch? I decided to take the risk, and, in the event of finding myself face to face with a German soldier, resolved to fight—or run—as seemed best at the moment.

Bang! Bang! Bang! The noise of my knocking reverberated through the whole house.

At last, I heard heavy footsteps on the brick floor, the key turned in the lock, and a burly farmer greeted me, thank God! in a language I did not understand.

The man was a thousand times too stolid. I wanted to embrace him, shake him, dance round and round on the kitchen floor with him.

I told him in a sort of pidgin-German-English that I was an Englishman who had just escaped from Germany. He

took me inside the house, which I lighted with a flash-lamp that I carried. The living-room was beautifully clean with its red-brick floor, and through an open door I saw a bed covered with a counterpane of many colours, from which a head peeped out, clad in a white nightcap. It was the farmer's wife. They spoke to each other in Dutch, but I could not understand. I took from my wet trousers pocket all the money that I possessed, laid it on the table, and begged him to take me to the nearest village, and hand me over to the police or the military authorities. He seemed reluctant to do so, and offered me the use of his barn for the night; but I was already shivering with cold, and decided that I would not trust any one who lived so near the German frontier. I felt that I should not be safe until I was in the custody either of Dutch soldiers or Dutch policemen. Then the old woman said something to her husband, and, feeling that it had reference to me, I asked him to tell me what she had said. In broken German he replied—

"My wife tells me to show you the path to the nearest village, if you will leave us your flash-lamp."

I pressed him to take it, and, shortly afterwards, we left the farm-house for the path which led to the village. There he bade me good-night. I swung along with a lighter step and a lighter heart than I had known for three and a half years. The cup of my happiness was running over. At last! My only pause was to drop on one knee on the gravel path and whisper three words of gratitude for my deliverance.

In the centre of the village I met two Dutch soldiers, gave myself up to them, and was led by them into some wooden barracks near by. There I spent two nights and two days.

. . . . . .

Liberty is wondrously sweet when one has fought for it. Looking back upon those three years of suffering and hardship from the corner of an English fireside, I feel that I would not have had things otherwise for worlds. Strange is the alchemy of youth which can so quickly transmute pain and hardship into a pleasant memory.

Conclusion.

THE OLD BAGHDAD-KERMANSHAH ROAD.

BY EDMUND CANDLER.

I.

NATURE has provided only one real road into Persia from the west. It has been trodden by soldiers, merchants, and pilgrims for twenty centuries, and no doubt it was a thoroughfare long before the origin of script. In ancient times it was the Babylon-Ecbatana road; it was known to Semiramis; it formed the boundary between Media and Assyria; the armies of Darius, Hytaspes, Cyrus, and Khusru Parvis passed along it in the ebb and flow of conquest; the Mongols invaded the south by it, the Arabs the north; Harun-al-Raschid was familiar with it; from early Muhammadan days it became the great pilgrim route from Persia to the shrines of Kerbela, Najaf, and Kazimain; and soon after the British entered Baghdad a column was sent along it to cut off the Turks who were falling back before the Russians from Hamadan. It is now the line of communications for our troops on the Persian border, and members of the Expeditionary Force will remember it with thankfulness as the one road of escape from the desert to the hills.

One has to cover nearly sixty miles of the blank emptiness which is Mesopotamia before one gets a glimpse of the upland country in the Jebel Hamrin foothills. At Baquba, where one crosses the Diala, there are palm groves of almost Malayan luxuriance; but when one leaves it behind the unrelieved desolation is repeated until one comes to Shahraban, another palm-girt, canalised town. Trees are abandoned here until one reaches Kizil Robat, twenty miles on; but four miles beyond Shahraban, on the banks of the Ruz Canal, one comes to stone. This is at the foot of the Jebel Hamrin under the pass. I had not seen so much as a pebble in Mesopotamia since we landed at Basra nearly eighteen months before. After this stone and wood, without which earth can arrive at very little in the way of feature or architectural design, become more frequent. Stone, even rock, abounds, but a tree is still a rarity.

I doubt if a traveller entering Jebel Hamrin from the north would think these hills beautiful. They are stark and naked, and except for two months in the spring there is nothing virginal about them. Nor are they impressive. In outline they offer that uniform repetition of feature you find in all hot lands, a tired and disciplined symmetry with no

wilfulness in it—so many hooded cowls in a row, so many spines and spurs and re-entrants like diagrams in a school-book, no earth-born castles or rocks

> "fantastically set
> With cupola or minaret."

Anywhere else Jebel Hamrin might stand for the very prose and geometry of hills. The range is lifted a bare four hundred feet above the plain, and is quite devoid of grandeur or design. But sublimity is relative. To us a corner or screen of rock behind which anything could hide contained a mystery. The broken ground was the old sea margin: it made all the difference. Hitherto we had trodden the alluvial silt where flowers did not grow, or grew unwillingly. Here there were flowers—the homely buttercup, veronica, charlock, cranesbill, pimpernel, clover, vetch, dandelion, and fields of iris and red anemone.

The first action we fought at Jebel Hamrin, in the third week of March 1917, was a sanguinary affair. The Turks held us back on the hills when they were crossing the Diala with the Russians behind them, and, as we imagined, pressing them hard. The Turkish gunners had the range of us, and we learnt the difference between the burst of a shell on hard rock and soft soil. Also the warren of low hillocks was so complicated that one never knew if one were on dead ground or not. In places where one thought one was under cover one drew machine-gun fire, and most of the little passes between one low ridge and another were traps. I remember a patch of open ground between rock which a sniper had marked for his preserve. There was a bush of some blue leguminous plant just where one reached cover the other side, and the impulse to recross was irresistible. The relief to be out of the flat was so great that the actual hills and the birds and the flowers and the gravel and rock interested me more at the time than the business that had brought us there. These were no doubt the preoccupations of a trivial mind, but one consoled oneself with the thought that the covetousness and intrigues, or the honest instinct for survival, which had sent armed bodies of men through these passes for the last two thousand years were merely transient, whereas the hills in their stark nakedness or dainty covering were eternal. I have no doubt there were renegades in the armies of the Chosroes who botanised in a battle. Nobody bothers much now which side did the most killing, but the iris and the mauve hyacinth and the red anemone still blossom under Jebel Hamrin.

A day or two after the battle the Turks effected their crossing of the Diala. They had been too strong for us to dislodge with our two brigades. Then, on April 2, we met the Cossacks at Kizil Robat. A single squadron had ridden in without transport or supplies. It was a hurried meeting, and they left the same night, for

we could neither of us stretch our line of communications far enough to keep up contact. But I was to meet them afterwards at Mendali, and again at Kasri-Shirin. During the summer the force that formed our right flank stayed at Baquba, then in October we advanced again, and there was a second battle of Jebel Hamrin. This was a bloodless affair. The Turks' position lay across the Khanikin road and along the Jebel Hamrin ridge, on both banks of the Diala. Our plan was to round him up by a huge converging movement. While our columns pressed in on his right, left, and centre, our cavalry was to work round from Mendali in the rear of his position, and cut off his retreat along the Khanikin road. All these movements were carried out like clockwork, without a hitch. Every one was in the right place at the right time. Only our net closed on emptiness. The Turk had slipped away in the night and crossed the Diala. The smoke of trains —for by this time the railway had followed us—and the dust of innumerable convoys had warned him. We had put a Nasmyth hammer in motion to crush a grasshopper. That to the civilian mind is exactly how battles ought to be fought. We showed our hand, and the Turk threw down his on the table. He took off his hat to us and departed, leaving us the position. It was a very gentlemanly affair, and nobody was much hurt. I think our casualties on the left bank were six.

These operations took place in the third week of October, and I did not expect to find flowers; but, as if to prove the catholic virtue of the soil, the fields by the Ruz Canal under Table Mountain were covered with autumn crocuses. The Turks had really quitted this time, and we were able to explore the gorge in peace where the Diala forces its passage through the hills. Here it is a river of singular beauty. The blue water flows between cliffs of the steep red rock which gives its name to the range. "Hamrin" in Arabic is the feminine plural of the adjective *ahmar*, red. The rock is red sandstone, and the redness lightens and deepens continually with sun and cloud, from the red of old brick to the pink of the inside of a shell washed up by the tide. In the soft evening light I have seen the whole range as pink as the walls of Jaipur.

Six weeks later we were engaged on Jebel Hamrin again. This time operations were on the right bank of the Diala, and in a three days' battle we cleared the ridge, drove the Turks over the Sakal Tutan pass down into the Qara Tappah plain, and pursued them over the Nahrin river and the undulating spurs beyond until they melted away in the neighbourhood of Kifri on the Mosul road. On the second morning after the night march we looked down over a vast stretch of country from the Sakal Tutan pass. The white wisps of dust in the distance, like the smoke of camp-fires, were the Turks we had dislodged the day before trekking over the plain to take

up their new position in the next range; and the long grey caterpillar on the flank, with its sparkle of a helio like a glistening dewdrop, was one of our columns converging on them from the Diala. This manœuvre battle in the hills was in the old style, and I think nearly every one enjoyed it. I was reminded of Tibet. We covered nearly forty miles of strange country, and never knew where we were going to camp or how far the pursuit was to be pushed; and it was over alternating hill and plain —mostly the kind of high gravelly down on which you would expect to see marmots. This was in November. Six months afterwards, in May 1918, when the grass was deep and the hollyhocks glowed in the corn and the great rhubarb-like glossostemon was a feature in the landscape, I was with the cavalry 120 miles north-west of Jebel Hamrin, in the high plateaux of Southern Kurdestan. We drove the Turks out of Kifri and Kirkup, and pursued them as far as Altun Kupru, on the banks of the Lesser Zab.

It was not until the first week of January 1918 that I had the chance of following the Baghdad-Kermanshah road into Persia, as far as the watershed of the Zagros range, a few miles above Kerind. I went with an escort to bring back the wireless detachment, who had been with the Cossacks the best part of a year in Kermanshah. As we went north we saw whiter sheep and earlier grass. The same rolling gravelly downs extended from Kizil Robat to Khanikin, the Turkish frontier town where the Alwand is crossed by a fine ten-arched bridge. The actual frontier is crossed some nine miles farther on, and one does not come on relics of the hungry generations that trod one another down on the road between Babylon and Ecbatana until one reaches Kasri-Shirin, the first town across the border. It is a picturesque little mountain town and spreads itself out above the Alwand river and under an old stone castle on a hill. The palms of Baquba, Shahraban, Kizil Robat, and Khanikin give place to willows—a sign that one has left the sub-tropical deserts behind. North of the town one passes a wall of cyclopean masonry, twelve feet high where it touches the road, built of hewn stone and mortar or cement. The thought of a castrum as the Roman origin of Kasri leapt to one's mind. But the place is Sassanian. The foundations of the palace, and the fort, and the walls of the park cover many square miles. Within this enclosure were the gardens of Khusru Parvis and Shirin, his beautiful, devout, and accomplished queen, the Christian woman who played polo and founded churches and monasteries; and it is from Khusru and Shirin that the town derives its name. On the other side of the river there is a rainbow formation in the rock, one arc behind another in tiers of three, purple in the centre, white above, and a dark mul-

berry tint beneath. The cliffs beyond were coated with a purplish-red like sea-wrack, and their rocky bases, glistening in the rain, looked as if the ebbing tide had just left them. One might search for the rainbows another day and not find them, for the colours were constantly changing. The red sea-wrack faded to a dull lichen hue as I watched it. In feature and colour it is a rich country for the sun and cloud to play on, and the hillside where the ancient palace stood was a natural throne for the Chosroes.

On the road to Seri Pul we passed four of the round Persian watch-towers, all standing on hills where the road could be best ambushed and enfiladed—at "the place of thieves," or "cut-throat pass," or "the gorge that destroys horses' shoes." They stood out so boldly and in such desolation that one would have pulled out one's "slug-horn," if one had one, and blown lustily at them. The pilgrim traffic had ceased since the beginning of the war. Even in the least pious years 50,000 used to pass along this road to Kerbela, and many corpses for burial in the holy places, and the revenue from the traffic was high both in Kermanshah and Khanikin.

The passage of pilgrims explained the spaciousness of the Khans, or Serais. Coming back in the flood and rain the whole force put up in the two Khans at Seri Pul—the X—shires, the Persian gendarmerie, the machine-gun company, the ambulance, the Sappers and Miners with a few motors and some transport in one Khan, and the mountain battery and cavalry in the other. In the outer alcoves, or cubicles, you found odds and ends like horses, mules, drabies, cooks, Persian gendarmes, Kurdish drivers, staff officers, interpreters; and in the wide inner vaulted corridors, which had stabled the cavalry of Shah Abbas in Queen Elizabeth's days, the whole of the X—shire battalion, the hospital, signallers, sappers, and machine-gun company.

The country was rich enough in peace time to support its own population and the hundred thousand pilgrims who used the road; but when we passed through it was desolate. It was not a case of mere ravage, but of almost complete denudation. Standing crops had been burnt and granaries destroyed, so that there was no seed for the next harvest. Khanikin was half demolished, Kasri-Shirin a waste, and the rich fields of Seri Pul lay fallow; the village and Khan were deserted. Five armies had passed through in eighteen months, Cossack and Turk, living on the country and destroying everything. Trees had been felled, solid roofs broken up, and rafters and doors torn away for firewood. Hearths lay open to the wind and weather. The great gateway of the Khan at Seri Pul had been consumed in campfires. The few inhabitants that had been left in the villages by the roadside were ragged, starved, and miserable, and begged piteously for food.

On the way back two young Kurds, of good physique, but wasted, came to us in the gateway of the Khan at Seri Pul and begged for bread. We gave them each a couple of ration biscuits. The next day we met them on the road. They had gone twenty miles, stumbling through the rain and the dark. One lay dead by the roadside, the other stood over him and called to us as we passed. He begged us to take the corpse in the motor. It was impossible. In peace time, perhaps, two of us might have walked and given our seats to the corpse and its guardian. But in war one does not do these things: the calls for relief are too many. The old standard of charity would immobilise one, though I do not think one is less sensitive to suffering because of one's daily contact with it. When we refused the man offered us a small piece of silver, the value of fourpence. Then he pointed to the sky and wept, and called upon Allah. "Sahib! Sahib! to Kasri-Shirin!" he wailed after us, and the throb of the engine drowned his sobs. I hoped that one of the empty ambulances that were following would take him up, but I felt his reproachful eyes in the small of my back for miles.

In Khanikin the next day I saw an emaciated old woman, all skin and bones, being bled by a leech. She did not look as if she had any blood in her, but a stream poured out of her arm that would have filled a small jug. The leech picked up a lump of the filthy trodden bazaar clay and clapped it on the wound. The woman carefully extracted a small copper piece from a bag and gave it to him. He took it grumblingly, and she tottered away. The bleeding may have been a normal operation in Khanikin, resorted to as in the days of our grandfathers, as a salve to a dozen different kinds of distress; but the shadow of starvation was so palpable everywhere that I was afraid the old lady might have thought she would be less hungry after she had been bled. The same day a driver told me that he and a corporal had been attacked by two Kurds, who were unarmed, and were evidently driven to it by hunger, thinking that they might find food on the motor. Our men hammered them and then fed them. It was a relief to hear that we were sending rice into Khanikin.

We approached Pai Taq, the village at the foot of the pass, in stormy weather. Every one was very much struck with the scenery. Perhaps we exaggerated the grandeur of it. After a year on the Tigris flat one might discover sublimity in a railway embankment. Mist always magnifies things. The dark blanket of cloud hanging over the bluff headlands made them look immense. Then the storm, the rainbow, the intermittent shafts of light irradiating promontories, the red halo thrown on the cliffs at sunset, transfigured everything. There were splashes of autumn colouring on mountain

and plain, the foxy red of the osiers, and the tawny rushes in the Alwand stream under the rock wall, and the russet oak scrub on the hillsides. The pass is approached by a clear-cut outer gate in the immediate foothills. One enters by a broad sweeping avenue of plain between two great walls of rock which close and regally usher you in. The ancient pomp of Persia seemed to have been preserved in these hills. As they entered the pass the home-returning soldiers of Xerxes, Darius, and the Chosroes must have compared the majesty of their own land with the poverty in design of the territories they had been overrunning. Pai Taq and Kasri-Shirin were the thresholds of a kingdom whose people would naturally be conquerors.

Yet the Sassanidae came down to Ctesiphon, a land fertile in crops in those days, but sterile in beauty, and in respect to climate thinly partitioned from hell. For thousands of years the Kings of the earth chose to live in Mesopotamia. I have never understood why Nebuchadnezzar and his like were content with their firepit in Babylon when they might have seated their majesty on a natural throne in the hills. Nebuchadnezzar, speaking in the bricks of a protective wall he built on the Euphrates, says: "I raised its foundations on the depth of the water, its top I exalted like the wooded mountains." He was familiar, it seems, with the existence of hills. He might have lived in Kermanshah and farmed and colonised the plain. Or he might have had a summer palace in the Pusht-i-Kuh, or in Lebanon when it was really a forest and the camel convoys of Babylon carried the sweet-scented timber over the desert of Palmyra to the temple of Marduk at Esagila. But he lived in Babylon because he loved it. He went on repairing and extending the city because it was already immense. "Because my heart did not wish the dwelling-place of my majesty to be in another place, because I did not build a royal dwelling in any other place, and because I did not consign the kingly property to all lands, my dwelling-place in Babylon grew insufficient for the dignity of my majesty;" because he only cared about "amazing the people" and being remembered for ever, and therefore never knew the happiness of the camel-boy who brought the cedar-wood from Lebanon, and who for one month in three breathed mountain air and trod on flowers. And because of the antiquity of his name and its inclusion in holy writ one is apt to forget that Nebuchadnezzar was a sad vulgarian, materialist, and snob, and that it was the most perfect piece of poetic justice in the Bible that he should have been made to eat grass—the grass of Babylon and not of Kermanshah.

The Taq-i-Garra pass (5200 feet) is only steep on the west side. One mounts nearly 1500 feet in two and a half miles, passing the tâq, a massive arch of marble, the wayside resting-place for travellers and pilgrims

which gives the village and the pass their name. The origin of the tâq is clouded in legend, but I like to think that Khusru used to rest there with his Shirin and water his black horse Shabdiz. After the first ascent the gradient is easy for another eleven or twelve miles; then the pass peters out into the high Persian plateau. I was determined to reach the watershed, but as luck would have it we met the wireless detachment in the middle of the pass and the column turned back. Things seemed pretty hopeless, but I managed to wheedle an escort out of the cavalry, a rissaldar and four sowars, and was able to push on. First we met the advance guard of the mounted Persian gendarmerie in their black cloaks, then the detachment and their wireless carts drawn by six stout mules. Their faces were black with wind and weather, and the white butterfly on their slouch hats faded to a lichen grey. At any ordinary time I should have pulled up and asked them how they had spent the winter in Kermanshah; but now I would not have stopped if I had met the holy carpet or Joan of Arc. It was getting late, and it was not much more than an even chance whether I could reach the far end of the pass and get back by night. I met an officer who called back to me that he was the end of the convoy. I explained that I was going to have a look at the pass. He shouted back, "Not worth it. A good six miles. No view. All like this." I thanked him and said I would go on a bit, but my silent comment was: View be d——d. One is not a Yankee collecting God Almighty's coloured posters.

No book or talk, eulogy or detraction, can explain a pass. Every pass has its own peculiar way of taking you through a mountain range, and always something new to show you on the other side. It is the end of a scene, act, or chapter, and it does not matter whether it is bathos or climax or anything between so long as you wring its secret out of it. It clinches one experience and promises another. The physical effort in meeting the challenge and the mental suspense keep pace, and honour and curiosity are satisfied at the same time. The maps that the wanderer carries in his head would have little colour in them if it were not for passes.

We rode on for ages. The narrow valley grew almost flat, but refused to become a watershed, and the stream trickled the wrong way, the way we had come, feeding the Diala, and ultimately the unlovely Tigris. I wanted a stream that fed something else.[1] But

[1] It is not generally realised, and I did not realise it at the time, that the Ab-i-Kerind, the Kara Su, and the streams one crosses for more than a hundred miles beyond the Taq-i-Garra pass ultimately feed the Tigris by the Kharkeh channel, or lose themselves in the marshes about Hawizeh, and that the real watershed, the last barrier to the gulf-seeking streams, lies between Kangavar and Hamadan.

it seemed hopeless. One could not keep those sowars out till long after dark for a mere superstition.

But was it a superstition? I thought of the unlit lamp and the ungirt loin. A balked pass seemed the symbol of feebleness, incompleteness, and indecision. It is as bad to turn from a pass when one has set one's face to it as it is to turn one's back on an unbeaten enemy.

I asked the rissaldar if he had ever been in snow. He told me that he had seen it, but that he had never touched it. One got a glimpse of it, he said, on clear days in the Himalayas from his village near Lala Musa in the Punjab. I told him that in half an hour we should be treading it. It was a happy thought, as it gave us a common objective. Till then I had been depressed by the feeling that I was merely the occasion for a "fatigue." But the rissaldar, like nearly all sepoys, was a responsive fellow, and seemed quite to enter into the spirit of the search for actual snow. We came to some level stretches, not too stony for a canter, and so we put a mile or two behind us; but the stream refused to dwindle, and persisted in flowing the wrong way.

We had nearly reached the hour and the minute which I had fixed as the obligatory limit to our adventure, when a turn gave us a low horizon, which seemed to be literally dropping away. I felt that this was no illusion, and an old blackened guard-house, such as stands at all entrances and exits on these frontiers, doubled my assurance. We galloped over the peaty turf, and saw the stream swinging down on us from a lateral ravine. We reached the wall. In front there was no wild drop falling away. Instead, we stood on the high brown Persian plateau, girt with low mulberry-coloured hills. The Taq-i-Garra leads up to the table-land. The rissaldar remarked it. He said that he had never seen a pass before which was all ascent and no decline. But the snow was there. It had fallen appropriately on the spot. I ate some, gulping down a libation to the mountains and a prayer that I might never spend another summer in the Mesopotamian plain. Then I showed the rissaldar how we made snowballs in England, and he pelted the sowars. They were enjoying it. Before we mounted I saw the youngest of them grinning self-consciously, fill his horse's nose-bag with snow, to carry away as testimony of the adventure to unbelieving bhais. An unsympathetic escort would have spoilt it. As it was, I felt as pleased as if we had won another battle.

We got back soon after dark, and a staff officer asked me if I had had a good view. I told him that there was not much of a view, so I suppose he took it that our labour was wasted. However, he agreed that it must have been homely to be in snow again. The snow in the pass, and the unexpected

brown tableland, and the crisp russet leaves of the oak, were very homely. The dead leaves were clinging to the bough in the same obstinate way they have through the long winter in English lanes and copses; and when you crushed them they emitted the same delicious dank smell. And I was glad to have seen the central tableland. Before that my wanderings had only touched the glacis, as it were, of Persia. I had a picture now of the kind of country that repeats itself in parallel strips of ridge and plain right up to where the northern rampart falls away in forest-clad slopes to the shores of the Caspian. Memories of passes like the Taq-i-Garra, the Khyber, and the Nathu-la, so different in what they divulge, convert the atlas from a mere book of reference to a handbook of romance.

II.

I was offered the chance of returning with the Persian gendarmerie from Kasri-Shirin to Kermanshah, but I decided to wait until the spring, when the hills would be covered with flowers. On April 10 I was in Jebel Hamrin. It was a late summer. The hills were a blaze of colour. The scarlet anemone (*Anemone coronaria*) in the folds of the gravel grew as thick as poppies in the corn, and the fields of wild barley whitened like the under-fur of an animal stroked by the cool hand of the wind. At Pai Taq I explored the gorge under the pass. The Alwand disdains steps or gradients, and makes its descent into the lower valley in two bold leaps. I have never seen anything more sudden or final than the end of the gorge, or more studiedly architectural. One could imagine it built by the master mason of some Achemaean or Sassanian king, a piece of landscape gardening in the paradisus of Artaxerxes.

You stand in an arched chamber and look up through the broken roof to the blue sky and the little fringing trees on the edge of the cliff overhanging the upper bed of the stream. The huge grotto is so walled and roofed that no breeze can enter it from the east or west or north — only the perpetual cool draught of air that is flung outward by the fall. The upper valley is hidden. You can only see the last two leaps of the torrent, first where it plunges from an invisible channel on to a platform of rock worn by the water into a basin, the kind of Triton reservoir into which architects aspire to confine a cascade, before it is released in falls on to the terraced gardens underneath. The water is held here, and collects for its last plunge where it tumbles from the centre of the rim of the basin, a solid column clear of the rock, into the green pool below

The cliffs on both sides are overhanging, and the rock is hollowed away behind the fall so that this almost complete vault is repeated in diminishing tiers like the segments of a spiral. The pool is deep and bow-shaped, and the water gathers again for its quiet discharge by a natural conduit in the centre corresponding to the lip of the basin above. After this it resumes the waywardness of a mountain stream, but its fall is the most ordered and symmetrical I have seen, very beautiful without being wild, and quite Persian in its inspiration. If not the fall of the Alwand, it must have been some such natural cascade that inspired the first Persian landscape gardener with the traditions that one finds expressed in every walled pleasaunce from Azerbaijan to Kashmir. It may have been fancy, but I thought I found a certain formalism in all Persian scenery consistent with one's early conceptions of the country. On every march one is conscious of being in a land which was the nursery of poets, kings, fountains, palaces, and pride, the origin of nearly everything that is decorative in the near and middle East.

There was only wanting some bright formal plant to complete the sense of design appropriate in a garden of the Chosroes. It was too early in the year for the path that led to the grotto to have a border of any kind; but by a strange coincidence I found my first wild tulips (*Tulipa montana*) there. This most formal of flowers is not likely to be a favourite with wanderers who do not know it wild. One thinks of it as rather a bourgeois plant, the habitué of public gardens and florists' windows. One owes it the same kind of debt as one owes a municipality, and remembers that its bulbs are imported by the gross from the Dutch. It is a privileged plant, and one associates it with tailors' bills. But a red, crinkly-leaved, upright tulip in the Zagros is a different thing. At the first sight of it any silly prejudice one may have felt against the family is dissipated for ever, just as a democrat's intolerance of dandies is forgotten when he discovers how well the genus shapes in a campaign.

Oddly enough, the rough formalism which I had discovered or imagined in Persian landscape was repeated in Kerind, the first town beyond the Taq-i-Garra pass. Kerind fills the mouth of the gorge where the Ab-i-Kerind flows out into the plateau. It is built in two perfect lunettes, bisected by the stream and spreading fanwise on each bank. The curtain of splintered rock behind, with ribs as symmetrical as vertebræ, is divided into two sweeping aros, like the town, which is the same colour as the cliff, with its apex wedged deep in the gorge. Behind this romantic cleft the orchards stretch a mile. The apricots, almonds, apple, cherry, peach, were in blossom. Everything was in the same stage as in an early April season at home. There were banks of violets, grape-hyacinths, celan-

dines, dandelions in flower. The catkins were on the willows. The leaf-buds of the walnuts and of the delicate, upright, white-stemmed poplars that lined the water-cuts had not emerged. Last year's dead leaves and seeds clung to the briar. It was a much more English flora than you will find in southern Europe.

The Serai and the outskirts of the town adjoining the road had been destroyed. The place was in the grip of famine. The streets were strewn with the shells of acorns which the Kerindis were bringing down from the Zagros, and eating raw or grinding into flour. Scattered over the plateau one saw thin black figures gathering herbs or searching the road for grain or oats, collecting single ears dropped from the horses' nose-bags where the cavalry or transport had fed, or dissecting offal for undigested grain. Some of these groups of two or three made me think of the Angelus picture. It was the spiritual antithesis of Millet's vision. The peasants, as they ceased their plucking of herbs to watch us pass, were standing in the same arrested way, only with this difference: it was a reaping of weeds instead of corn; instead of promise, hope, fulfilment, faith, and the confident repose in a loving and watchful God, there was hopelessness, denial, unbelief, no sign or encouragement to believe, only the heedless elements and the slow torpor ending in death.

We had started relief work on the road, and were able to feed a thousand or so, but we could not command corn enough to affect more than the margin of distress, and money was of little use when prices were so high. Nearly every man, woman, and child begged food of us. Their skeleton frames and the dead we passed on the road were more eloquent than their cries of "Where is your charity?" We gave what we could spare, but in most cases we could not give. The eyes of the dying pierced the small of our backs like gimlets as we left them behind; their voices followed us calling out of the abyss. And we passers-by excused our helplessness, saying, "We cannot be their providence." "What is the use of a loaf of bread among so many?" "It is no good feeding this woman or child; it only means they will die the day after to-morrow instead of to-day, a few more hours of wretchedness." Yet inwardly we were feeling that any starving soul we left to die was a personal reproach. The fate of a thousand others did not affect our relations with the particular man. It was a case between us and him—a strong man with food and money, and a weak man with nothing, and the hunger which we could satisfy by giving away part of our possessions, submerging him inch by inch, hour by hour creeping over him as insidiously and irresistibly as the tide. If one put oneself in the starving man's place, one saw the dreadful logic of this. Does one let a man sink within reach of

one's hand because a number of others are drowning? In the agony of every voice and gesture this question was implicit.

Up to Pai Taq conditions were better than they had been in January, owing to the supplies we were able to send along the road, but we were entering a zone which could depend on no relief other than what we could bring it. Some of our troops had orphans with them, whom they had picked up lying beside the bodies of fathers and mothers who had died by the roadside. "John Hampshire," a typical little Kurdish brat, under five, cheery and rotund, with a perpetual smile and a paunch that denied want, used to come into mess after dinner and light our cigarettes, and amuse himself with us in as full a measure as we were amused with him.

After Kerind things became worse, and one could think of nothing else but the general want. Persia had been visited by a drought in 1917. Districts untouched by war were famine-stricken. In Teheran alone, according to the statistics of the local newspapers, 40,000 had died before the end of March. In Hamadan, the Persians told me, they were eating human flesh; only the dogs and nature's other professional scavengers were strong; they and the children fought for carrion by the roadside. In the province of Kermanshah, at ordinary times the richest grain-producing land in Persia, now wasted for three years by Cossack and Turk in alternate advance and retreat, there was little hope that the needier part of the population could hold out until the harvest.

The capital of the province lies some fifty miles by road north-east of Kerind, and one crosses three passes of over 5000 feet on the way—the Nil Sikhan (5350 feet), the Charzowar (5360 feet), and the Ainal Kush (5350 feet). From the Ainal Kush one looks down upon the plain of Kermanshah. The city is spread on two low hills commanding one of the grandest panoramas in Persia. Five miles to the north, across a gently swelling plain, rise the foundations of the Massif that culminates in Perau (10,470 feet) and breaks off abruptly to the east in the sheer rock face of Bisotun. Deep gorges penetrate it, the home of ibex and the country of those unassailable robber tribes the Pairawand and Kuliai. To the west, following a branch of the Kara Su, winds the road to Suleimania and Kurdistan; to the east, under the sculptured bluff of Bisotun, the road to Hamadan and the Caspian, with branches striking off to Ispahan, Tabriz, and Teheran. The great beauty of these mountains of the plateau is that one can comprehend their whole anatomy at a glance. Their approaches are not hidden or confused by lesser hills or broken ground. Perau and Bisotun stand boldly on their foundations, the sweeping plateau is their threshold; their troubled

summits are set off by the repose of the plain. This does not enhance their mystery or wildness; it lends their mountain spirit an added symmetry and grace. It is the formalism of Persian landscape again. The hills owe to the soft lines of the plateau what the diamond owes its foil.

We descended the pass in a break of the storm. Fresh snow lay on the ranges all round, and the vivid green of the crops in the valley of the Kara Su promised a rich harvest. If only the people could hold out another three months there would be no more want. The gardens behind the town winding up the banks of the stream into the hills, in one valley an uninterrupted stretch of four miles, were a shimmer of bloom, pink of apple, and white of cherry, plum, and pear. Orchards and vineyards were mingled and fenced with the pale straight poplar which serves as timber and a screen against the wind. These valleys are what Ruskin would call "the wheat and grape lands": they are perennially watered by springs, and if nature has her own way there need never be drought. The famine of 1917-18 was man's doing, a ripple of the universal death oozing from its fountain of envy and hate and pride in Berlin.

The plague and misery with which the Hun has infected the world is the more manifest the farther one gets from the hub of the evil. One expects the routine of hell at the source of pollution in the Continent that conceived it. It is only when one finds the shadow of the angel of death flung over the mountains and deserts of Asia that one realises how complete is the sway of the devil raised in Potsdam. My first realisation of a famine on a wide scale was in the streets of Kermanshah. I was shocked to see a boy dead in the Bazaar. He was lying by the side of the road, his hands clutched, and some horse grain sticking to his lips as if he had been unable to swallow his last meal. The bazaars were crowded, but no one seemed to take any notice of him. A little farther on I passed another body of a young man, mere blotched skin and bone in loose rags. The crowd stepped to one side indifferently. There were children lying on skins in the mud crying piteously. I was told that it is a common trick of the Persian mendicant to put his children out like this to attract alms, also that they would borrow corpses to lay by their side on the road to excite pity. The professional beggar in Persia has studied the art of moving compassion in times of plenty—he is a realistic actor of a high order—his penetrating and distressing whine cuts like a jagged saw. Now the wolf was really at the door. You could see his ravages in every face. There was no pretence. The large troop of professional beggars was swelled by the whole of the poorer part of the population. Twenty or

thirty died in the streets every day uncared for by their own people, and many lay dead in the houses. There was a public scavenger who collected the bodies in the evening and threw them into the pit outside the city. The law of the jungle held in Kermanshah. When the hunger gripped a family the husband would sometimes turn his wives and children into the street or abandon his home himself. The weakest went to the wall. I was changing some rupee notes at a money-changer's and gave a keran to a starved woman who was standing by. Four other women were on her like vultures, tearing at her hands and dress, howling and sobbing in a frightful way. I saw another woman, not strong enough to protect herself, buy a fold of bread at a stall; it was dragged from her and torn to strips like meat thrown to animals. One seldom saw a face with any happiness in it or health or pity, and one felt that the most merciful thing that could befall Kermanshah would be an earthquake or some such swift biblical visitation.

We must have saved thousands at Hamadan, Kerind, and Kermanshah by relief work on the roads. At Kermanshah we bought a large stock of grain that the Russians had left behind, and distributed it. When the American Mission first gave away food to the Kermanshahis, the mob rushed them and got in behind the store, lusty young fellows elbowing the women and children aside, and falling on the bread like wolves. The missionaries had to throw it over the heads of the strong to the weak; but this set the pack doubling back again, and there was nothing to do but to beat them off. "One cannot feed men with one hand and beat them with another," a missionary lady explained; yet it was done, and discipline introduced, by sending them empty away at the next muster.

There was food in Kermanshah for those who could afford it, and many of the people were well-to-do; but they seemed incapable of pity or any disinterested act. Our own motives were suspected. I think they regarded our relief work as a political move: they believed we were making capital out of the people's distress, which, no doubt, seemed to them a very natural thing to do. So in Teheran, when the English ladies established kitchens and fed the famine-stricken, the papers were sarcastic, saying, "The British are cunningly seeking to glorify themselves." To such intellectuals one prefers the wolfish pack. In Kermanshah I helped in the distribution of the first relief tickets. The weakest and most helpless and the least capable of work were the first to receive aid, but these were soon thrust aside and trampled on as the crowd surged in. At first one could do nothing. Infinite pity alternated with disgust. One was soon on the defensive with a whirling stick. Even so, one was robbed and looted. It was all very natural.

Nothing counts with the starving but their desperate need. The animal is bound to emerge. In the bazaars the pressure of the crowd and their cries brought on a dizziness, and one walked in a dream, and thought the people were dead and in hell—that one was oneself in hell, a spectator wandering among the damned, in nowise blessed for one's fortuitous immunity from their pain. Their ashen earthy faces stared up at one, their hands clutched at one's sleeve; their voices were more dreadful than their faces and hands. There was such a decay of body and mind everywhere—such humiliation of the flesh and despair of the spirit—that one could not conceive of any resurrection, any further punishment to come, or breath of redeeming life to revive the dull spark in the clay.

The carnage of a battlefield has a touch of sublimity in it; but in famine there is no idealism, only a degradation, enforced and pitiless, a nakedness of despair which seems the negation of a watchful and interested God. And the fairer the scene the more pitiless is this seeming neglect. Here one saw in humanity a physical and moral hideousness, as if the Almighty had relegated man to the false gods he had established by choice, leaving him to find in them what help he could; while the One Spirit dwelt and breathed in the calm serenity of the snows, in the fruit-trees whose pink-and-white blossoms fretted the sky, the fairest promise in nature, and in the mountains spread all round in their strength and beauty and repose, the inscrutable manifestation of a Providence which may withhold its message or its meaning, but which cannot ultimately lie.

THE MAN FROM THE CLOUDS.

BY J. STORER CLOUSTON.

PART II.

III. THE ALCOHOLIC PATIENT.

ON a raw, grey, February morning Mr Thomas Sylvester Hobhouse bade a polite farewell to the medical gentleman who had escorted him thus far, and stepped aboard the little steamer sailing from a certain small and ancient port out into the northern isles of that archipelago. This medical escort was a typical instance of my uncle's relentless thoroughness. He was not in the secret, and so all the way from Euston to those remote islands I had to endure the ordeal of sitting under the eye of a conscientious, middle-aged gentleman with a strong Yorkshire accent and but one idea in his head: to keep in readiness to seize me at each station in case I leapt out of the carriage and headed for the refreshment-rooms. We parted, I think, with equal relief on either side.

Under a heavy sky and a chilly wind we steamed through divers waterways, touched at divers islands, and shipped and unshipped many cattle. At last, when it had turned afternoon and the wind was beginning to feel wet as well as chilly, Thomas Sylvester stepped ashore on the modest pier at Ransay. Already he had noted from the deck his prospective host, pipe in mouth and hands in his knickerbocker pockets, among a small knot of inhabitants, but to his relief there were no other familiar faces.

"Let me be firmly established as Mr Hobhouse, the doctor's new paying guest, before they look at me too closely!" he said to himself.

In the doctor's blue eyes there was not a sign of recognition or suspicion. I noticed again his habit of glancing at one askance, which had raised my ready suspicions last time we had met, but apart from that his greeting was cordial and pleasant enough.

"I've only got an open trap, Mr Hobhouse," he said, "and it's a three-mile drive. I hope you have got a warm coat."

Mr Hobhouse, I may mention, was a gentleman with an extremely polite, nervously effusive manner, who always agreed with everybody, and blinked a little as he looked at them with apologetic friendliness through his gold-rimmed glasses. Those who have seen that sprightly comedy, "Heels Up," may perhaps remember the not unsuccessful character of Sir Douglas Jenkinson, Bart. (played by Mr Roger Merton). Mr Thomas Sylvester Hobhouse would have reminded them of Sir Douglas forcibly.

"Oh yes, doctor, a beautifully warm coat; you needn't worry about me at all; I shall be very comfortable—very comfortable indeed, thank you," Mr Hobhouse assured him.

Dr Rendall eyed his patient again, and there seemed to be a gleam of satisfaction in his glance, as though this were the kind of polite acquiescent gentleman he liked.

There was a weary delay in getting my luggage out of the hold, and the February afternoon had grown greyer by the time we started in the doctor's pony trap. As the road was heavy with mud and covered with patches of loose metal every here and there, those three miles proved the longest I have ever driven. By this time the wind was sweeping clouds of fine rain into our faces, and, seen through this driving vapour, the island looked another place from the Ransay of summer-time. The flowers were gone, and the corn, and even the greenness of the grass, which now was of a pale yellowish-olive hue; and I thought that a nakeder, more inhospitable-looking spot surely man had never visited.

Under such circumstances we talked little, the doctor only making a remark now and then in a dutiful way, and Mr Hobhouse effusively agreeing with him. That gentleman was quite content to postpone his inquiries until he had got a little warmer and drier, and at times he even felt acute anxiety lest the bleak house that loomed ahead, visible afar over the treeless country, was actually moving away from them. They seemed to approach it so slowly.

Evening was near at hand when Mr Hobhouse entered his teetotal haven, and his effusiveness was quite sincere as he rubbed his hands over a blazing fire in the doctor's smoking-room, and still sincerer when he faced an excellent high tea.

The conversation naturally turned on the war, and Thomas Sylvester showed an anxiety to learn his host's opinions, and an enthusiastic agreement with each one of them that seemed to please the doctor. He became more and more talkative and genial, but though his guest mentally went through his words with a tooth-comb as he uttered them, he had to confess at the end of a chatty hour that the doctor exhibited neither any special knowledge of military and naval affairs, nor any lack of zeal for the cause of his country.

"No treason so far!" said Thomas to himself.

Then with what he flattered himself was the art which conceals art, Mr Hobhouse brought the conversation round to the subject of the doctor himself and his household. He enthusiastically assured his host that each arrangement he mentioned was the best imaginable —from the doctor's being a bachelor to his having no hot water laid on in the bathroom, but large cans brought when necessary. And presently he blinked more amiably than ever, and inquired—

"And do you often have

—er—guests, doctor—guests such as myself?"

The doctor's geniality seemed suddenly to contract a little.

"Occasionally," he said briefly.

"Quite so," agreed Mr Hobhouse. "Too often would be a great nuisance. Occasionally—yes, yes—that must be much pleasanter. Just when you feel inclined. I see. And I hope you get decent fellows as a rule, doctor. It would be very unpleasant otherwise."

"It is," said Dr Rendall with distinct emphasis.

"I trust *I* won't be a nuisance," said Mr Hobhouse anxiously.

"Oh no, no," said the doctor hurriedly; "I was thinking of——"

He broke off, and his amiable guest tactfully changed the subject. A little later, with what he hoped was equal tact, he returned to it again. Assuring the doctor of his anxiety to give no trouble, he said—

"I'll do just as the last fellow did. You just put me into his shoes, doctor, and then you'll always know where you are."

There was no doubt about the oddness of the glance which Dr Rendall shot at his guest this time. His answer was a murmur that might have meant anything. Mr Hobhouse innocently rattled on—

"I presume he fitted into your ways all right, and so will I if you tell me first what—er—you did mention his name—or didn't you?"

"O'Brien," said the doctor.

"O'Brien?" repeated Mr Hobhouse with a distinct air of distaste for so mild a gentleman.

The doctor looked at him quickly.

"Do you know him?" he asked sharply.

"Oh no, no! Oh dear me, no! It's only that I have a very foolish and very stupid prejudice against Irishmen—as I presume he was."

Mr Hobhouse laughed pleasantly, and inwardly he laughed still more pleasantly, for his shot came off.

"So have I," agreed the doctor; and there was no doubt that he was in earnest.

Mr Hobhouse decided that he had probed the matter sufficiently for the present, and with what he was now beginning to consider his usual discretion he changed the subject.

Before they parted that night he could not resist one touch of art, despite the counsels of Sir Francis.

"Before we go to bed, doctor," he said with his most ingratiating smile, "do you think one little drop would do us any harm? I feel as though I might have a little cold coming on——"

But the doctor was shaking his head, kindly but firmly.

"Well, well; better not. I quite agree with you, doctor," gushed his guest. "Good-night, doctor; good-night!"

"I wonder if the doctor ever had such a blinkin' ass in his house before!" said the amiable gentleman to himself as he shut his bedroom door behind him.

Looking at myself in the glass with a kind of chastened complacence, I decided that the man who could perceive in Mr Hobhouse any reminiscence of the mysterious young stranger of six months ago would have a singularly piercing eye. At the same time it was a sobering experience to gaze at that black-bearded gentleman, with his hair parted in the middle and brushed low down over his forehead, and his foolish-looking pince-nez, and reflect that there was no artificial difference between him and the vanished Roger Merton, save those eyeglasses and a little hair-dye. That was my own face, and my own hair, and, I presumed, my own natural latent idiocy blinking behind those glasses. I turned away from the mirror with mingled feelings.

As the hour was not late (early to bed being part of the cure) I put on my dressing-gown and sat down to smoke and chew the cud of my evening's conversation with Dr Rendall. The more I saw of him, the more favourably, on the whole, the man impressed me. He was a gentleman, and seemed a good fellow. Being a bachelor with outdoor tastes and an easy-going disposition, it was not at all impossible to understand him choosing the estate of his family to settle down on, isolated though it was. Certainly one could not honestly charge it against him as a suspicious circumstance.

By far the most interesting discovery was his obvious dislike to Mr O'Brien. Not once, but several times, he had shown it in the course of our talk. He conveyed the suggestion, moreover, that the man had oppressed him in some way, and that it was a relief to have got rid of him. In view of the fact that he had been so anxious to secure another resident patient, this seemed a little odd, and a theory began to take shape in my mind. Supposing O'Brien had in some way induced the doctor unwillingly to abet a treasonable scheme, that would account for his feelings very well, especially looking to O'Brien's unpleasing personality. But, on the other hand, events had made it clear that treason was going on without O'Brien, so how could the doctor have got clear of it? And if he were still in it, this theory of his relations to his late patient was manifestly weak.

"To bed!" said Thomas Sylvester to himself, after an hour of these reflections. "You are theorising too soon."

In the morning he was up betimes and downstairs a good ten minutes before he knew the doctor was likely to appear. Into the smoking-room he went, shut the door carefully behind him, and made for the window. A grey and windy prospect met his eyes, but they scarcely glanced at it. Mr Hobhouse had something else to think of. Twice or thrice he pulled the blind up and down, and minutely examined the string and the little brass pulley.

"That blind certainly does not come down at a touch," he said to himself, "and there is not a sign of its having been repaired within the last few years. Therefore it did not drop accidentally six months ago."

IV. THE TEST.

That afternoon, as the weather had cleared somewhat, Dr Rendall proposed walking over to his cousin's house, and presenting Mr Hobhouse to the laird and his daughter. This ordeal had to be undergone sooner or later, so I decided I had better fall in with his suggestion and get it over at once. Besides, it was an obvious part of my programme to make a great deal of outdoor exercise a principal feature of Mr Hobhouse's cure, and I felt bound to agree at once with any proposal to take a walk. We had taken the precaution, by the way, of telling the doctor beforehand of my limp (caused by a motoring accident when I was at the wheel in a condition I should not have been in), and assuring him that the surgeon encouraged exercise to complete the cure. So off we set for the "big house."

On the way the doctor gave his guest a certain amount of general information concerning the people they were going to meet, but as Mr Hobhouse happened to know it already, it need not be chronicled here.

As the pair approached the weather-beaten old mansion, looking now in its true setting against the wintry sky, Thomas Sylvester became acutely conscious of the return of a familiar sensation. It was, in fact, precisely the sensation which one Roger Merton had enjoyed when waiting for his cue to step from dim obscurity into the flare of the footlights on the first night of a new drama. Would his old acquaintances accept Mr Hobhouse without question as an entire stranger? If he spied so much as one suspicious questioning glance, his whole scheme was exploded.

We were shown into the drawing-room, and, to my great relief, Mr Rendall was the first to appear, for I felt I could stand the scrutiny of Jean's bright eyes a deal more readily if I had once got into the swing of talk with her father. In his eye there was certainly no trace of question. With his dry and formidable courtesy he greeted Mr Hobhouse, and in a minute or two they were talking away in that friendly fashion which Mr Hobhouse was pleased to notice people fell into very readily with him. And small wonder, for the creature was so grossly affable and (if I say it myself) so infernally plausible.

His great hobby, it appeared, was antiquarian research, and though he let slip a few remarks that showed he was well versed in his subject, his rôle, as usual, was that of the flatteringly eager inquirer.

Needless to say, his learning had been acquired by diligent application within the last week, and that it had a very definite object behind it. The laird had but a smattering of the subject, but being an intelligent well-read man, he was quite able to discuss Mr Hobhouse's favourite pursuit, so that when his daughter entered the room she found herself in an atmosphere as little reminiscent of the mysterious stranger as it was possible to create in the time.

All the same, it was an anxious moment when Jean's eyes first fell upon him, and he heaved a deep sigh of relief when he saw not a spark of recognition in them. On his part, Thomas Sylvester was scrupulously careful to avoid the least resemblance to the conduct of the mysterious Merton, even in the smallest point. There was no assurance, no tribute of attention and consciousness of her presence, such as a girl as charming as Miss Rendall has the right to expect from every man with an eye in his head, and which I must confess the mysterious stranger used to pay her, for all her dislike to him. Mr Hobhouse, of course, was dreadfully polite, but seemed a little shy of the sex, and after a few commonplaces on either side she turned to her cousin, and he to his host.

Tea was brought in, and the party chatted away as amicably as any party of four in the kingdom. Thomas had found his tea-party legs by this time, and quite enjoyed the situation. Mr Rendall impressed him much more favourably than he had impressed Roger Merton. The grimness seemed to fall off the man when one got him going in talk, and a vein of kindliness opened instead.

"I'm dashed if there seems to be anything suspicious in anybody this time!" said Mr Hobhouse to himself rather disconsolately.

He had hardly made this reflection when he happened to glance at Jean. This, as a matter of fact, had happened several times previously. For one thing, she was looking a picture, and for another, the alcoholic visitor liked to reassure himself at intervals that she was still without shadow of suspicion. And each time he had felt perfectly reassured.

But this time he was conscious of a sudden thrill of certainty that Miss Rendall had been covertly studying him, and that now (though her eyes turned away instantly) she had some new food for thought. Instantly he asked for another cup of tea, and blinked at her benignantly as their eyes met. Did he actually read in hers confirmation of his first instinctive feeling, or was it only a too quick imagination? Mr Hobhouse wondered very seriously.

Thereafter, for some little time, as he talked with her father, he was acutely aware that both she and the doctor were very silent, and when now and then he glanced at her, she seemed to be thinking

rather than listening. And then, just as he was beginning to grow a trifle uneasy, this phase seemed to pass away, and the next time he looked at her she met his glance with a faint smile. In fact, she had smiled several times before the doctor and his patient took their departure, and, as they shook hands at the end, Thomas Sylvester was agreeably conscious of the kindest look she had ever favoured him with. And finally, when her father hoped they might see their new acquaintance soon again, she joined him in hoping, both with her words and (it seemed to him) her eyes.

During the first part of their walk home Mr Hobhouse was very silent. Going back over their call, while everything was fresh in his memory, he had to confess that his prejudices against Mr Rendall were ready to vanish altogether if he were ready to let them. In fact, the grim ironic Mr Rendall, conversing with the suspicious stranger, was an entirely different person from the friendly Mr Rendall who conversed with the innocent-looking Thomas Sylvester Hobhouse. On the face of it this was obviously to be explained by his suspicions of the stranger. But of what did he suspect him? Of being a German spy, as he professed? Or of being what he was? That was the whole point, and it seemed to me that getting him arrested and removed was equally consistent with either alternative.

But what of his daughter, that slim, dangerously dainty piece of mystery? Were her two changes of attitude in the course of this afternoon mere mirages seen by an eye disordered by suspicion? They might be, but Mr Hobhouse was prepared to stake his davy that they were real. And what, then, did they imply? Surely not that she suspected the truth. He could not read them into that. That she was simply a coquette, and for want of more amusing game (such, for instance, as Mr O'Brien) was prepared to have a little flirtation with his successor? This was, somehow or other, not a very agreeable solution, but I began to suspect it might be the true one. In any case she was a puzzling factor, and the best course of action seemed to me to be to avoid her society in the meanwhile, and to keep my eyes wide open for possible trouble. I hardly thought there would be trouble, but it were well to be on the look-out.

This being decided, the amiable Mr Hobhouse started conversation with the doctor, and gradually by gentle and circuitous methods led the talk, *viâ* the war in general, to the part in the war played by these islands, and to any interesting events that might have happened in them. He was heading in his devious way for the visit of the suspicious stranger, but at this point the doctor brought him in of his own accord.

"We had one most extraordinary thing happen in this place," said he. "Nobody has got to the bottom of it yet."

"Really!" cried Mr Hobhouse. "How very interesting! What was it?"

"Well," said the doctor, "one morning when I had that fellow O'Brien staying with me, a young man walked into my house under the impression —so he said—that it was my cousin's. Whether he told the truth or not I've often wondered since. He had no cap, was buttoned up in an oilskin coat (though I may say it was a fine morning), and talked with a distinct foreign accent. I could swear it was German, but O'Brien, who contradicted everything, stuck to it that it was Russian. A lot he knew about Russian! He was only in the house about five minutes, for when he discovered his mistake —or what he said was his mistake—he went off. And that is all I saw of him personally."

"But did he go to Mr Rendall's, then?"

The doctor nodded.

"He turned up there and spent two or three nights in the house. The chap had the impudence of the devil. He said he had been landed from one of our own cruisers and didn't want to be recognised as an officer, so would they be kind enough to lend him a coat and let him look his uniform coat up in a drawer! He was in his oilskin all this time, you must remember. A day or two later my cousins grew suspicious and opened that drawer. What do you think they found?"

"Maps!" guessed Mr Hobhouse.

"Nothing at all! He had never had a uniform coat. They promptly wired to the Naval Authorities, locked him in his room meanwhile, and when Commander Whiteclett appeared he arrested him and took him off."

"And who was he?"

The doctor turned to his guest with an expression of considerable indignation.

"The damned secrecy of these Navy people is past belief! Do you know that not even my cousins who caught the man for them were ever told a single word about him! Whiteclett took him straight off to his drifter without so much as saying good-bye—much less thank you—to my cousin Philip, and that was the last of it!"

"Then you never learned who the fellow was?"

"He gave his name as Merton—George, or was it Roger? Merton. But you can believe as much of that as you like."

"And did he land from a cruiser?"

"Not likely! But nobody was ever told how he did land. They found what they said was a parachute, but it's my belief that was either a blind or it was really some kind of collapsible boat. I never saw the thing myself, and O'Brien, who did see it, having heard somebody say it was a parachute, of course swore it was not."

"And did the man do nothing while he was on the island?"

"God knows what he may not have done! Naturally, he told nobody what he was after,

and no one actually saw him doing anything; but there are plenty of stories."

"What kind of stories?"

"Oh, the usual kind—that he was seen flashing lights on the shore and carrying petrol tins. But you can believe as much of them as you like."

"And have your cousins no theory? They apparently saw a good deal of him."

"My cousin Philip says frankly he is absolutely beaten by the whole performance. Jean—well, girls are rum things."

"What are Miss Rendall's views, then?" I inquired.

"She is generally quick enough at guessing, and as fond of gossip as most of her sex, but for some reason she keeps very quiet about it. It's my belief she knows something. In fact, I shouldn't be surprised if Whiteclett had told her a little and sworn her to secrecy. Men do tell women things sometimes, as I daresay you have noticed for yourself. Mr Hobhouse."

"What a very strange story!" murmured Mr Hobhouse.

So this was the tale of my escapade as it was told in Ransay. The doctor's manner of telling it was the best guarantee of his own good faith I could wish, and I was ready now to dismiss the blind incident as a misleading trifle. But O'Brien seemed to have gone out of his way to throw doubt on every point raised, and, curiously enough, to have always offered a wrong solution. It might be sheer contrariness, but it struck me as odd. As to Miss Jean's silence, what did that mean? I resolved to keep my eyes very wide open indeed.

V. WAITING.

By a fortunate chance Dr Rendall was no expert in antiquarian matters, and yet had sufficient respect for those who were to give them every encouragement and make all allowances for any irregularity in their hours caused thereby. Mr Hobhouse possessed several very learned-looking volumes, such as 'The Early Christian Monuments of Scotland,' 'The Windy Isles in Early Celtic Times,' 'Ecclesiological Notes on some of the Islands of Scotland,' and other tomes of that nature; and from these he could quote whole paragraphs without so much as pausing for breath (in fact, he dared not pause, lest he forgot). Mr Hobhouse, moreover, talked in his garrulous way of adding his own modest contribution to this literature in the shape of a monograph on the antiquities of Ransay.

With this end in view it was therefore very natural that he should spend much of his time rambling over the island, particularly along the coasts, where he declared the early monuments he was especially interested in were mostly to be found, and should

even at times be detained by his enthusiasm till darkness had fallen. It was also very natural that he should wish to consult all the most ancient inhabitants, and should in consequence seek out and interview every native over sixty years of age. In short, this hobby not only gave this enthusiastic gentleman a sound pretext for being in the most out-of-the-way places at the most unlikely hours, but also for inspecting narrowly with his own eyes each white-bearded patriarch who might, or might not, have worn six months ago a pair of tinted spectacles; which—to descend slightly in the literary scale—accounts for the milk in the cocoanut.

All this, of course, was not only perceived by his guardian medical attendant, but blessed with his strong approval, for nothing counteracts the taste for liquor so effectually as another hobby. But what Thomas Sylvester devoutly prayed the doctor did not see was his patient slipping out of his window in the small hours of the morning, and from the roof of an outhouse just below examining the shore through a night-glass. In February and March weather this was far too uncomfortable to last long or to be repeated every night, and the shore was too far away to make it very effective. Still, he did think he noticed a glimmer once or twice, and each time his antiquarian expedition next day included certain artless inquiries which might have thrown some light on the matter had the answers been satisfactory. As a matter of fact, however, they never were, and the extraordinary appearance of interest with which the effusive gentleman listened to useless information reflected more credit on his resolution than any one will ever realise.

I may add that the professional watchers in the island were not of course in the secret of Mr Hobhouse's identity, and therefore could not report to him directly anything they might see or suspect. But if they did see or suspect anything, he would very quickly be informed through another source. However, Commander Whiteclett based no great hopes on the possibility of catching our wily enemy out by means of a palpable man in uniform, and Mr H. had been instructed to act exactly as though he were alone on the job.

One of his earliest expeditions was made to the site of a prehistoric building in the near vicinity of the Scollays' farm—at least there was a grassy knoll visible which Mr H.'s expert eye at once pronounced to be worthy of very careful inspection, and in order to confirm his theories he decided to visit the farm to make inquiry as to any possible traditions regarding it.

He passed round the knoll with this purpose, to discover that he was no longer meditating alone. A familiar figure confronted him, with dark staring eyes, gaping mouth, and stubbly beard—my old friend Jock. For a moment there

returned that feeling of stage fright. Next to the Rendalls, the Scollay household, and particularly Jock, had seen and conversed most often with the mysterious Merton. Jock was only an idiot, but where reason is lacking instinct is apt to be strong, and instinct might distinguish an old acquaintance through all my disguise. Anyhow, rightly or wrongly, I felt that this was another delicate moment.

"Good-day, my good fellow. Good-day to you!" said the friendly Mr Hobhouse. "A little better weather to-day!"

The surprise of the affable gentleman at getting only a grunt in reply, his air of gradual comprehension, and then of friendly sympathy, were acted for all they were worth. And, to my vast relief, Jock showed no glimmer of recognition of the young man with the revolver.

"Do you know who lives at that farm?" inquired Mr Hobhouse, speaking very distinctly. "Tolly, you say? Oh, jolly? Yes, very jolly! Ha, ha! Good-bye, my lad, good-bye to you!"

Jock's hoot of laughter was answered by Mr Hobhouse's giggle, and they set off down to the farm, the antiquary in front limping rather more markedly than usual, and the idiot rambling behind.

The visit to the Scollays was a distinct success, so far as establishing the personality of Mr Thomas Sylvester Hobhouse went. At first they looked at him with an obvious suspicion, and replied to his questions with a reticence that gave him a few uneasy moments. But in ten minutes his indefatigable friendliness had conquered the household, and he knew that he was safe to visit that knoll whenever the fancy took him. Peter senior told him a long story about the fairies who were seen dancing round the knoll in his father's time, and though his family were evidently a little distressed by his reference to anything so unfashionable, and Jock hooted several times, their visitor exhibited the liveliest interest, and put the tale religiously down in his note-book.

This was all that could be done at the moment — the establishment of a perfectly harmless reputation and of a natural reason for visiting that particular place at odd times. Mr Hobhouse obtained permission to do a little digging there if he desired it, and parted with the family on the best of terms.

"Slow work!" he said to himself as he struck out for home, with his limp rapidly vanishing. "But what the devil else can one do? What is there definite to take hold of?"

That was the baffling feature of the business. As my cousin said, such scent as there was had grown cold by this time, and one had to begin at the beginning again. And so far there seemed to be no beginning. The detectives of fiction might have found some clue to start a train of logical and inevitable reasoning that led straight to the criminal, but the detective of fact had

utterly failed, and the brilliant young amateur of fact was likewise completely at sea.

What good, for instance, had my visit to the Scollays done? I asked myself. If they were innocent, I had wasted my time. If they were guilty, what had I discovered to bring it home to them? Absolutely nothing! And the same with each inhabitant of that island whom I had seen. Some cunning and powerful organisation was certainly at work, to the detriment of my country, but the only point I had scored against them was that I had got into the place without their recognising me. At least I presumed I had, or I should scarcely still be alive to tell the tale — unless they had grown either more merciful or more timid since I was here last. And their continued immunity would scarcely be likely to produce either of those effects.

The only specific thing I could think of looking for was the old man with the tinted spectacles. So far I was well on the way to proving one thing about him, and that the least satisfactory thing I could prove. Apparently Bolton was right, and no such person existed. Therefore I was as far off catching him as ever, and had merely the added certainty that my enemies were extremely resourceful, and spared no trouble to make sure of things when in doubt. However, I meant to go on looking till I had exhausted all the old men in the place. I was about half-way through them by this time, so far as I could calculate.

Thus the winter days passed, growing longer but no warmer and no finer. One would have had early touches of spring by this time in the South, but here it was still winter undiluted. The violence and frequency of the winds was amazing. Indeed, I seldom remember having less than a stiff breeze, and every now and then a full tearing, howling gale would scour the bare low-lying island till it seemed as if even the houses could scarcely stand up to it much longer, while the sea would be one bewildering chaos of breaking and subsiding crests, white against the leaden furrows, surging on till they smashed into a continuous line of foam along our iron coast.

How the wind howled and whistled round that melancholy mansion of the doctor's! I forget who had built it, or why — some land-agent or factor, I think, who had once lived on the estate—but I know I frequently cursed him. It stood up just high enough to catch the full force of every blast that blew, and not quite high enough to get a really fine view. There was too much bleak foreground — so that one got no value from the site whatever, so far as I could see. And, lord, it was draughty!

My only company was the doctor, and he was out most of the day. Even at nights I began to find him a curiously moody companion. There were moments when my suspicions

revived again; he used to glance at me furtively, leave the room mysteriously for half an hour at a time, and do little more than grunt when he was spoken to. And then next day he would be such a pleasant, sensible, downright sort of fellow that I could only remember his simple telling of the tale of my own visit, and dismiss him from my calculations.

And so life went on for some three weeks uneventfully enough for a desperate and disguised adventurer. I received several letters from my uncle, and I was thankful it had been arranged I should not answer them. The dear man had evidently such a twopenny-coloured conception of the hazardous life I was leading that a truthful recital of my adventures might have brought him down in person to stir things up. But there was nothing to stir: I could only wait.

VI. THE SPECTACLED MAN.

It was, I remember, on a rare day of bright, still, frosty weather that Mr Hobhouse returned a little late for the doctor's midday dinner. The garrulous creature was looking thoughtful and, as it were, subdued—wanting a dram, no doubt thought any who chanced to spy him in this unusual condition. But as he opened the front door he became his foolish self instantaneously. The sound of a strange voice had reached him distinctly.

"Let me introduce Captain Whiteclett — Mr Hobhouse," said the doctor.

He and the stranger had already begun dinner, and Commander Whiteclett rose and bowed politely. Mr Hobhouse bowed still more politely, and having the advantage of being at the doctor's back for the moment, was able to embellish his low obeisance with several curious facial expressions. The Commander at the same moment was attacked with a sharp bout of coughing, but presently recovering, the meal proceeded very pleasantly.

It appeared that Commander Whiteclett was visiting the island in the course of a tour of inspection, and having some acquaintance with the doctor, had dropped in for lunch. He seemed pleased to meet Mr Hobhouse, and was as affable as naval officers always are, though every now and then it might have been noticed by a very close observer that after meeting that gentleman's eye he showed a tendency to stare suddenly out of the window for several moments. Mr Hobhouse on his part was in his most gushing humour, and in fact chatted almost continuously through the meal.

As they passed out of the dining-room ahead of the doctor the two guests exchanged a whisper, and about a quarter of an hour later Mr Hobhouse declared that he

must set forth and resume his antiquarian researches, and effusively bade the Commander good-bye. Thereupon the Commander said he also must be off, and wondered in which direction his fellow-guest was walking. It chanced that they were both going the same way, and so they departed together.

"Well, you ridiculous-looking dipsomaniac, how do you like water for dinner?" inquired the Commander when they were safely out of earshot.

"It lies cold on the tummy," said I, "and if you've brought a flask, Jack——"

"I have," said my cousin, "but wait a bit till there are no witnesses. And by the way, old chap, I must tell you that you're a d——d good actor."

"My photograph has appeared in the 'Tatler,'" I confessed.

"And what news?" he asked.

"Up till this morning I should have said 'none.' My dear Jack, it has been the most hopelessly baffling business you can possibly imagine. I think I am quite a success as an alcoholic patient, and also accepted by this time as the typical harmless antiquary. So I am able to wander all over the place and talk to everybody, but there has been nothing to take hold of. I have seen no sign of anything happening——" I caught his eye and asked quickly, "Has anything happened?"

He nodded.

"Signalling night before last and a submarine seen yesterday that we suspect of having been here."

"Under my nose!" I groaned. "A fat lot of good I am!"

"My dear chap, you can't possibly watch the whole coast all night and every night. This time the signals were seen from the sea as a matter of fact. But you can note the night, and also the hour, which was 2.45 A.M., G.M.T., as near as I can make out from the report. By the way, you had better set your watch by mine now while we remember. Possibly you may be able to discover who was out at that hour night before last."

"I may, but it's a thousand to one against it. Give me a thousand such chances, and I'll get him! That's just about how it seems to work out, so far."

"Haven't you got any new ideas?"

"Without new evidence, what new ideas can one get? And I only got my first piece of evidence this morning. In fact, I haven't had time to think it over yet."

"Let's hear it," said my cousin keenly.

"I have been on the track of that old boy with spectacles, as being the only definite thing to look for, so far. I did what Bolton did—went to see every old man in the place, and this morning I polished off the last of them, and came to the same conclusion as he did. There is no such old gentleman on the island. But there *was* one, for a short time, one morning; and he was a fake like Thomas Sylvester Hobhouse; and this

morning I've heard of some one else who saw him!"

"By Gad!" exclaimed my cousin. "That sounds like the beginning of business."

"Only the beginning, I'm afraid. This morning I interviewed my last old man—to find, of course, he wasn't the fellow I was after. I interviewed him on the usual subject—ancient traditions of the island, and from that we passed on to the latest tradition, the legend of the mysterious visitor last August. He told me all about it, with many embellishments. However, he was shrewd enough not to believe all he heard; and to show me what absurd stories are put about, he informed me that his own small granddaughter, aged six, had declared that she had seen the mysterious visitor, only she described him as having a white beard and funny spectacles. I asked him exactly where this phenomenon had been observed, and, by Jingo, Jack, it was at the very place I met him; only when she saw him he had left the road, and was hurrying down to the sea. She described him as running, which finally demolished her reputation for truthfulness, for, as her grandfather observed, men of his age don't run. But that was my friend right enough!"

"Heading for the sea?"

"For the beach, I take it. You see, you can pop over the edge almost anywhere along that shore, and get out of sight among the rocks in a moment. I presume he squatted down there, pocketed his spectacles and beard, took off his disreputable overcoat, and either hid it or possibly pinned up the skirts, and put it on under his other coat, and walked off looking like—well, that's the rub, what did he look like then? And that's just where I seem no forrader."

"Still, this is something."

"Yes, and I suppose we ought to deduce something more from the episode. I've already concluded that the high piping voice he used might well have concealed an accent, and I've also decided, from what I've heard of the local language since, that he hadn't the native intonation."

"And he headed for the beach," added my cousin. "Therefore he certainly did not come from any house in the near neighbourhood."

"That puts the doctor's house out of court, if you're right. But he may possibly have thought it better not to do his dressing up at home."

"I see you've still got your knife into O'Brien!" laughed my cousin. "But I think my notion is the likeliest——"

He broke off suddenly, and we instinctively moved a pace farther apart. A figure had appeared round a turn of the road just ahead of us—a trim dainty figure, delightful to see in such a place, but a little disconcerting to see so suddenly and so close to us. It was Jean Rendall, looking her best, but not, it seemed to me, quite in the right place.

Had she noticed anything? There was not a sign of it in her greeting. She gave us both one of her quick smiles,

and as Jack pulled up to speak to her, she stopped too, and in talking to him I noticed afresh how full of expression those neatly chiselled, rather petite features became when she talked, and what a charming little air of knowing her way about the world she had. Young though she was, I could see in her very clearly either a valuable friend or a dangerous enemy — and what an easy girl to fall in love with, had circumstances been very different!

Jack explained in a very natural offhand manner how he came to be in Mr Hobhouse's company, and Mr Hobhouse corroborated his statement in his own effusive way. And then, as we parted, she threw her smile full on that gentleman, and asked—

"Why haven't you been to see us again, Mr Hobhouse? Do come to tea one day!"

Mr Hobhouse gabbled a polite but slightly evasive reply, and we walked on.

"Do you mean to say," demanded my cousin, "that you have only been to see this delectable lady once?"

"That's all," I admitted.

"What's the reason? It isn't very like your methods, Roger."

"It isn't," I admitted again. "But then, you see, what with pestilential weather and all these antiquarian visits to pay, my available time has been pretty well occupied."

"But that house is one to keep a particular eye on."

"That house has got a pair of particularly bright eyes in it. On my one visit there I felt a little too like walking on the edge of a precipice to wish to repeat the experience often. If that girl suspects me, Jack, and *if* she isn't the right sort, we are dished."

"Oh, dash it. I can't believe she's mixed up in this business!" he declared. "Of course one mustn't trust anybody; still, that doesn't prevent your going to tea with her. In fact, what you really ought to be doing is making love to her—so long as you keep your head."

"I am handicapped," I pointed out, "by drunken habits, a beard, and Mother Beagle's Beautiful Black Dye. No, Jack, I do not see orange-blossom this trip."

"Apart from these romantic dreams," persisted my cousin, "she is far more likely to be inquisitive about you if you never go near the house. In fact, I could see it in her eye to-day."

"Well," I said, "I'll call to-morrow and dispel her interest in me."

Since my talk with the doctor, his theory about Jean Rendall had crossed my mind occasionally, and improbable as it was, I thought I might as well test it.

"By the way," I asked, "did you by any chance ever speak to Miss Rendall about my last visit to the island?"

His look of surprise was a sufficient answer in itself.

"Speak to her of your adventure? Not a word at any time! Why?"

"The doctor has an idea

that she knows more than she says, and that you may have told her something."

"Rubbish!"

"I knew it was," I assured him.

And so that possibility was finally eliminated.

We thought it wiser that our ways should part some little distance from the pier.

"Good luck, old chap," said he, shaking my hand. "Keep playing the game you're at, and don't worry about trying to keep a look-out at nights. That's being done already, and though I don't believe the fellows are much use—not with such crafty devils against them—you can't do anything to help 'em. Getting out at night is too risky, and you're too far away at the house. Your game is to work it from the other end. Sooner or later they are absolutely bound to give you a clue."

His spirit and my little discovery of the morning sent me back in a distinctly more hopeful mood.

VII. A REMINISCENCE.

Next day I set out in the early afternoon to pay my call. The fine weather still held—bright sunshine with a nip in the air, and the road underfoot firm with frost—and I strode along in a wonderfully confident mood, all things considered. For, to tell the truth, I had been funking this visit. Instinctively I did not trust myself with Miss Jean Rendall. If she had any suspicions, and if she turned on to me the art of her sex and the charms of her particular self, I was well aware that Thomas Sylvester would have a bad time of it. In fact I really dared not answer for the fellow's nerve. He being both critical and susceptible, a girl with Jean's distinctive aroma was dangerous company with a job of this kind on hand; and playing the whisky-enfeebled fool in a dirty black beard ceased entirely to amuse me when the other party was Miss Rendall. However, this afternoon Mr Hobhouse felt braver, and stepped out briskly, resolved to do his bit.

As he approached the house the front door opened, and the very lady herself appeared. She carried a stick, and was evidently setting forth on a walk.

"This is very nice of you to come so soon, Mr Hobhouse," she said. "I am glad I hadn't gone farther before you appeared."

"Oh, but don't let me stop you, Miss Rendall," said Mr Hobhouse anxiously. "Really, I can't allow it; no, no, really not. You mustn't turn back, indeed you mustn't! Perhaps I shall find Mr Rendall at home."

"I was only going for a walk to nowhere in particular." She looked at him with an irresistible mixture of coyness and frankness, and suggested "Would you care to come for a

little walk too? It's far too early for tea."

What could the poor gentleman do? He gushed over the suggestion, of course, and accepted it.

"I was going to walk down to the shore," she said. "Will that suit you?"

Mr Hobhouse assured her that anywhere would suit him; he had no choice at all: anywhere, everywhere, nowhere would be all the same to him.

As they walked side by side down towards the sea, he was suddenly struck with the sense of being in a familiar situation, of a repetition of something that had happened before. And then he realised that this was actually the walk that the same girl and a young man, Merton, had taken on a memorable August night. He noted through his glasses the very wall behind which he had lit his pipe when the flare of his match revealed the butt-end of a pistol, and presently they were following the same winding way above the beach.

This did not serve to make the playing of his part any the easier. It filled him, in fact, with a continual fear of giving himself away by doing something he had done before. It was really a most irrational fear; but there it was. Under the circumstances his sustained babble and blink were distinctly creditable.

But what gave him a more excusable cause for apprehension was Miss Rendall's own attitude. That there was something on her mind, something behind her words, he felt morally certain. She spoke in the most natural way and on the most commonplace topics, but there were frequent silences, and it was during those he felt that without looking directly at him she was watching him. And once or twice he got it into his head that she was a little puzzled and uncertain, though whether it was about what to think or what to do he had no conception. He told himself that all this was only his own morbid imagination. Still, it made that walk an uncomfortable ordeal, and seldom did actor have to work harder to keep his end up.

Luckily, however, the man had the virtue of impudence, and not only did he manage to entertain the lady with a garrulous account of his antiquarian researches (reasoning acutely that women are seldom experts in such matters), but he even ventured to broach a delicate subject for his own ends.

"The gentleman who—er—resided with Dr Rendall last summer was not, I believe, very interested in antiquities," he observed. "Did you know him, Miss Rendall? Mr O'Brien was his name, I believe."

"Yes," she said, "I knew Mr O'Brien."

There was certainly no trace of any feeling, whether of like or dislike, in her voice.

"Not a very pleasant fellow, I believe," Mr Hobhouse went on. "At least I should judge not; I should gather not. But I trust he wasn't a friend of yours, Miss Rendall?"

"Not a particular friend.

But why do you think he was unpleasant?"

"Oh, only from Dr Rendall's references to him—only from that, I assure you," said Mr Hobhouse with propitiating eagerness.

"Really?" said she, her eyes opening.

There was no doubt that this information genuinely surprised her.

"I thought they seemed great friends," she added.

"Oh, they may have been—they may have been. I may be doing Mr O'Brien an injustice. Possibly I misunderstood your relative—quite possibly."

She was silent for a little while after this, and Mr Hobhouse too ceased chatting. He was eyeing the shore-line very curiously, and trying to piece together his recollections of it.

"I think, perhaps, we have gone far enough now," said she, and for a minute or two they stood still; and a very distinct sense of being in a familiar situation was borne in upon her companion.

And then all at once she exclaimed—

"Do you hear anything?"

I started and stared at her. For the moment I had ceased to be Mr Hobhouse, so straight had I been carried back to that night six months ago. Those were her very words, and if I were not much mistaken this was the very place. I nearly answered as I had answered before, but was just able to check myself. And then she broke the spell by laughing.

"It's only the sea! But it sounded so funny and hollow."

There was indeed a low gurgle just audible, as if the waves were breaking into some cave. It struck me that she must have singularly sharp ears to have noticed it. We stood there for a minute or two longer, and then she asked—

"Do you see any ancient remains, Mr Hobhouse?"

It was not, in fact, ancient remains that the eye-glasses were looking at, but I jumped at the chance of making sure of my bearings, and with an appearance of great eagerness told her that there seemed to be something decidedly interesting in the appearance of the rocks at that place.

"I can wait for a moment if you'd like to look at them nearer," she said.

"This is luck!" I said to myself as I scrambled down. "I believe I've found the actual place."

A few minutes' exploration left no doubt in my mind. I found the very cliff-face under which I had been decoyed, and was able to clear up one point. A man above could easily have struck at me with some implement, say, six feet long. I shut my eyes and pictured that curved mystery, and then in a flash I had it—a scythe-blade tied to a pole! If I could find a scythe-blade fastened to a pole, or a blade and pole separate, I should not be far off the end of my quest. The next moment I smiled at my own optimism when I realised what a house-to-house hunt that would imply. Still, I saw a

fresh possibility, and came back silently thanking my guide.

Conversation was rather easier coming back, perhaps because I felt in higher spirits, and could play my absurd part with more gusto. Still, the girl remained a little disquieting. She was now in a very smiling and friendly mood, and a man who blinked through gold-rimmed glasses and giggled through a dyed beard ought to have felt exceedingly flattered. But now I was saying to myself that, for a girl of fastidious taste, she was really too nice to such a fellow. And then I remembered that O'Brien had a black beard too, and the thought struck me—

"Can she have such pleasant recollections of black beards that I am providing her with reminiscent romance?"

I think it was just as this idea occurred to me that she roused me very sharply from my meditations.

"I suppose you have heard of the mysterious man who appeared here last summer?" she inquired.

It took Mr Hobhouse all his time to adjust himself to this question, but I think he managed it not unsuccessfully.

"The—ah? Oh yes, oh yes. The doctor told me the story. Most mysterious—most mysterious! What do you make of it yourself, Miss Rendall?"

"Did the doctor tell you that I once walked with him along this very shore? It was at night too, and he was armed with a pistol!"

A single stare of astonishment was fortunately able to cover two emotions. My own was expressed in the thought, "What the devil is she driving at now?" Mr Hobhouse's was expressed otherwise.

"You don't say so! God bless me—what a risk to run! He didn't—er—shoot at you, I hope?"

"No," she said, "he seemed pretty harmless."

"Ah, but you shouldn't run such risks, my dear young lady; you really shouldn't! Now I remember a young lady whom I used to know——" And thereupon Mr Hobhouse launched into an improbable anecdote which tried his inventive powers considerably. However, he was able to make it, and the comments thereupon, last till they were back at the house.

The fact was that my hardihood was not quite sufficient to stand a conversation about my own self behind my own back. It might have been amusing, and it might have been instructive, but it would certainly have been embarrassing. However, the incident served to reassure me that whatever she suspected me of (and I could not get that sense of being watched out of my head), it was not the correct suspicion. Had she guessed the truth, I could see no point at all in her reminiscence of the mysterious stranger, unless it were sheer pointless mischief, and she did not seem a pointless lady. Besides, when I glanced at myself in the drawing-room mirror, I said to myself, "Who could possibly guess!"

After that walk, tea and a

talk with her father were unexciting episodes. She kept very much in the background, but when we parted I seemed to note again that flicker of a very alluring smile.

"Can it be that she has a morbid taste for inebriates?" I wondered. "One has heard of women with curiously diseased fancies. Or, perhaps, she has simply a passion for reforming them. One of those smiles for every sober hour would be a distinct inducement to behave!"

But this was not business, and as I walked home I turned my thoughts sternly to that scythe-blade.

VIII. H.M.S. *URUGUAY.*

As I neared my bleak sanatorium I said to myself, "If only something would happen!"

Week after week spent within those walls or in wandering over this limited space of muddy roads and sodden fields, with nothing to show for it, was an unexhilarating prospect. Perhaps the recollection of the comfortable house and the pleasant company I had just left accentuated this feeling, and the swift disappearance of our glimpse of crispness and sunshine did nothing to raise the heart. In that low-lying isle one got the most extraordinary views of the weather, and could see storms approaching when they were still leagues away, and portents of rain or wind hours ahead of their coming. This evening the frost had vanished, the sun was sinking into a grey-blue bank, little filaments of wind-clouds were reaching all over the sky, and a stiff, chilly breeze was already blowing in from the sea.

"We are going to have a change," I thought.

And we were indeed going to have a change—and of more than weather. Those storm-clouds were blowing up the something I wanted to happen, though how promptly would I have changed my wish had I but guessed! But Fate had loosed that nor'-west gale, and there was no stopping the order of things now.

In the night I remember waking once or twice to hear the wind shouting down the chimney, and to feel very snug in bed. When I got up it was still blowing a full gale, and, looking out of my window, I could just catch a glimpse of the masts and funnels of a large steamer which seemed to be lying under the lee side of the island for shelter. What she was precisely I could not see enough of her to say, nor when we met at breakfast did the doctor know more about her.

Like many a storm that springs up very suddenly, this one began to subside as fast, and in the course of the morning I set out to have a closer look at the strange ship. Quarter of an hour's

walk in that direction told me all I wanted to know about her. In fact I recognised her as no stranger at all, but an old acquaintance —H.M.S. *Uruguay*, a great lump of an ex-liner once running to South American ports with a band in the saloon at nights. Now, painted grey, with the white ensign flying over her, and some hundreds of bluejackets and a formidable complement of 6-inch guns aboard, she was one of those auxiliary cruisers which have been doing so many odd jobs and getting through so much dirty, risky, arduous work during this war.

What had brought her under the lee of Ransay I could but guess — some engine trouble and that gale on top of it most probably; but there she was, and there were the islanders standing at each door gazing at her. I gazed too for a while, and then came back to our early dinner.

Going out again in the afternoon, the affable Mr Hobhouse was passing the time of day with a couple of petty officers within five minutes, and as he continued his walk he saw that, whatever was the reason, H.M.S. *Uruguay* was not going to leave immediately. The wind had now fallen to a stiff breeze, and, as she lay under the shelter of the island, shore-leave had evidently been given to a number of the men. First at one farm and then at another he could spy parties of bluejackets buying butter and eggs, poultry and cheeses, everything fresh from the land they could get. It was cheerful to see them again, and yet one uncomfortable thought did cross my mind as I looked at their great grey ship anchored there.

"What a sitting target for a submarine!" I said to myself. "Pray Heaven no submarine turns up here to-day!"

I had gone out to the bare northern headland, and was heading home again for tea, when I happened to see on the road a small knot of these bluejackets just parting from a couple of countrymen. This pair turned towards me, and in a moment I recognised my acquaintances, Peter Scollay junior, and Jock. Mr Hobhouse had visited their house several times by now, and was on the most friendly terms with the family.

"Good-day, Peter!" he cried as he passed them. "Have you been taking your brother to look at the ship?"

For some reason Peter stared at him in an odd way, and Jock burst into one of his loudest laughs. Peter seemed to mumble something which Mr Hobhouse failed to catch, and then, when they had passed, he could see him laughing too.

To be laughed at without knowing the reason why is always irritating, even to one of Mr Hobhouse's exceptionally amiable temperament, and it had the effect of suddenly sharpening his critical faculties. A thing struck him that had never happened to strike him

before. What was that great, strapping, Scollay fellow doing at home on a small croft, where he was quite superfluous, when his country needed every man? And why did the lout stare and then laugh? Considering what a vigilant eye was watching him behind Mr Hobhouse's glasses, it seemed to me unwise as well as rude.

In a moment I passed the bluejackets, who were distributing some purchases among their party before they set out for their ship, and I saw a possible excuse for Peter's amusement, though it seemed a poor one. The men were carrying a couple of baskets of eggs, two or three large cheeses, a parcel which probably contained butter, and one or two poultry. Presumably the pair had been selling them some of this assortment, and perhaps my suggestion that they had been merely sight-seeing struck them as humorous. It argued a poor sense of humour; still, there was one possibility.

Once more the amiable Mr Hobhouse showed his friendly spirit by addressing a few kindly words to the good fellows (that was what he called them, as being the phrase most suited to his foolish appearance), and in his artless way he was able to gather that he had been correct in supposing that Peter and Jock had been amongst their purveyors. Unfortunately he had not the foresight to inquire particularly which of the articles those two had purveyed. But I wonder very much whether any possible reader of this account, given what I knew up to this point, can honestly say that he would have put that question?

Well, I got home and sat down to high tea with Dr Rendall, and of course he began to talk of the *Uruguay's* visit. Even if nothing else had happened afterwards, such an event would have given Ransay food for several days' conversation.

"We are probably eating our last eggs and our last butter for the next week to come," he said with a laugh. "These sailors have cleared the island out, from all I can hear. They've even been to this house and got what they could, and I believe they practically cleaned out my cousin's farm."

"Really?" said Mr Hobhouse. "Really indeed? Ha, ha! Do you know, I found even the Scollays' selling them things?"

"Oh, I expect every one has been making hay while the sun shines," said he.

He had had one of his moody attacks so lately as the day before, but he had quite recovered his good humour by now, and in fact was in an extra jovial mood that evening. We sat up till about half-past ten, and then went up to our bedrooms.

I had reached the stage of pyjamas and was just opening my window for the night when the dreadful thing happened. Suddenly the whole island seemed to be illuminated. I turned my eyes instinctively to the place where the *Uruguay* lay, and there high into the

heavens mounted a blinding pillar of flame. The wind was still blowing pretty fresh away from me and towards the ship, but even against it the roar that followed shook every window and door in the house. The pillar of flame vanished the next instant, but high in the air fireballs seemed to linger for some minutes; and then the pillar of smoke rose up. It rose and rose, swift and gigantic, growing all the while greater and more terrible in girth, till at last when it was some hundreds of feet high it slowly stretched out at the top until it looked like some huge evil tree seen in a nightmare.

And there I stood at the window and stared; and there on the spot where H.M.S. *Uruguay* with her crew of hundreds and all her complement of officers (largely R.N.R. and R.N.V.R. men like myself) had lain, stood that gigantic pillar of smoke. Then all at once I realised that everything living in that ship and most of her inanimate self was represented now only by that foul column.

I heard the doctor's door open and his voice say—

"Mr Hobhouse! Hobhouse!"

I had presence of mind to clap my glasses hurriedly on my nose before I rushed into the passage.

"What has happened? Is that the ship gone, do you think?" he asked in a low voice.

I noticed that he seemed a man with a good control over his feelings. I had mine, too, pretty well in hand, but to play the absurd Thomas Hobhouse at such a moment was more than I cared to do. I preferred to show a little of what I felt, and get away from him on that excuse. So I stammered something, and then we looked at one another for a moment, and I hurriedly went back to my room.

IX. BOLTON ON THE TRACK.

"Only one survivor."

The doctor looked into my room about eight o'clock next morning to give me this brief bulletin. At breakfast he told me he had been out most of the night, but there had only been that single case for him. A boat from the island had picked a solitary living seaman out of the scum of oil, blackened by it like a negro and without a stitch of clothing. Some of the dead had been found, but not in a condition to be discussed, and of course many fragments of debris; and now a number of patrol boats were on the scene, he had handed over his patient to a naval doctor, and that was all the news of the tragedy up till eight o'clock.

I knew that John Whiteclett would certainly be in one of the patrol boats, and I spent the morning in looking out for him. Thus by an apparent accident, when the Commander did land about noon, he very soon walked into Mr Hobhouse. My cousin's face was grave and

set, and there being no witnesses, neither of us luckily had to act.

"Well, Jack?" I said.

"Did you see it happen?" he demanded.

"I happened to be at my window."

"Tell me what you saw," said he.

I told him, and he nodded at intervals.

"Just what a couple of other witnesses have told me," he said.

"Submarine?" I asked.

He shook his head.

"The odds against a torpedo sending a ship straight up like that are enormous. And one would have heard two explosions — which nobody did. Besides, the one man who was picked up has luckily been able to talk a little already. I am certain there was no torpedo attack."

"She simply blew up, then?"

"That was it."

"Accident or design?"

"God knows! Perhaps no one else ever will. It may have merely been the ammunition. As you know, that has happened before now. But it's a very curious coincidence that it should have happened off Ransay, knowing what we know. I hear a lot of the men were ashore buying things. I wonder what they brought aboard with them!"

"I can tell you what one lot brought — eggs, poultry, cheeses, and a large parcel in newspaper, which I took to be butter. But that was only one party I happened to see. They were all over the island."

He thought in silence for a few moments, and then he glanced at his watch.

"Look here, old chap," he said, "I'm afraid I must be getting off again now. Walk back with me as far as it's safe, and I'll tell you something that you must know. We can discuss the evidence later, when a little more has been collected. The point that concerns you is that Bolton has been sent for again."

"The devil he has! Do I retire, then?"

"Not at all. You see, nobody in these parts is in the Hobhouse secret, so they sent for Bolton at once to make his own kind of inquiries while we make ours. You, of course, go on making yours in your own way just the same. All the same, I think it would be tactful to stand aside—with your eyes open, of course — while Bolton is on the job."

"Tactful," I agreed, "but a little annoying."

"Well, Roger, it can't be helped, I'm afraid. I'm not the boss here, and the man is on his way now as fast as he can travel. And now, what about telling him who you really are? I've been thinking it over, and if you are agreeable I think I ought to."

I saw that this meant that he had decided he was going to, so I merely said—

"If you think it best, certainly tell him. Only swear him to secrecy."

"Certainly. And I'm sure the man himself will see the point in that. But, you see,

if I didn't tell him who you really were, he'd very likely put you down as a suspicious character and recommend your removal."

"You're quite right," I agreed.

"Besides, what you know may help him, and it would be a dog-in-the-manger kind of game to keep back anything, now that he has taken up the business."

"Right again. Well, I'll keep my nose out of the business till Bolton has had his innings."

"Good man!" said Jack. "Well, we'd better separate now. Good luck to you both!"

I trust I am not of an unduly jealous disposition, but being thus asked to take a back seat just as something really definite had happened was a strain on my philosophy. The tragedy of the *Uruguay* might not have anything to do with the secret agency in the island — though I felt in my bones it had—and Mr Bolton might come and go and leave me possibly with a little information to help my own quest. Still, it was annoying.

At the same time, my cousin's arguments were absolutely sound, and I saw perfectly that it would have been both foolish and ungenerous to play Hobhouse with the man. So I went back and picked up a novel and tried to dismiss the whole business from my mind in the meantime.

For the next twenty-four hours the island was full of gruesome stories and the wildest rumours, but for most of the time Mr Hobhouse stayed at home and finished his novel. It was on the evening of the day after the tragedy, when the doctor and he were sitting over the smoking-room fire, lighting their pipes after tea, that the bell rang.

"Hallo, who's that at this hour?" said the doctor.

I heard a heavy footstep in the passage, and guessed, but the only announcement was that a gentleman wished to see Dr Rendall. He was out of the room for a long time, nearly an hour by the clock, and when he came back his manner was serious and a little apologetic.

"I'm sorry to disturb you, Mr Hobhouse," said he, "and I assure you there is nothing to worry about, but the fact is a detective is here and wants to have a word with you."

"A detective!" exclaimed Mr Hobhouse nervously. "You don't say so? Dear me, what can he want me for!"

"He's a man Bolton," said the doctor, "the very man who came up about six months ago under the name of Thompson and gave himself out as a cattle-dealer. By Jove, I can see now what he came for! But anyhow it's about the *Uruguay* business this time, and he is interviewing everybody, and, if you don't mind, he'd like a few words with you."

I went into the dining-room and saw for the first time my

rival. He was a big, sturdy, red-faced man, with a plain bluff manner, an ideal dealer; but his eyes were shrewd and keen. In fact, once I had looked into them I put him down as a better man than I had fancied. We exchanged a conventional word on either side, and then both of us instinctively glanced at the door.

"Better speak quietly, Mr Merton," said he.

I nodded, and said with a smile—

"So you are not here as a dealer this time, Mr Bolton?"

"No," said he, "I want to get straight to business, and there's too much humbug and waste of time if one has to talk cattle for half an hour first. Besides, after what has just happened they'd be quite sharp enough here to tumble to the game. Anyhow, the people I want to get at would be, and there's no point in humbugging the others."

"Well," I said, "you know what I'm here for, and though I'm sorry to say I haven't been able to pick up much so far, anything I have picked up is at your service."

"Much obliged, Mr Merton," said he. "We're like a couple of terriers after the same rat, and as long as we get him that's all that matters. You've had your go, and now I'm going to have a little go."

He laughed genially, but it was clear enough that when he said two terriers, he meant one terrier at a time, and I accepted the situation frankly.

"Right you are," I said; "I'll take a breather while you go in and finish him off. Only, of course, if you want me to lend a hand, here I am, with nothing else to do."

He seemed distinctly relieved by this declaration and grew more friendly than ever.

"Well, now to come to business," he said. "I must tell you frankly in the first place, Mr Merton, that there were some things in your story last time you were here that I didn't know just how much to believe in. The most truthful people sometimes imagine the queerest things. If you'd had my experience, Mr Merton, you'd feel just the same about a tale like yours. But now I know you and know what's been happening here, and particularly what's happened yesterday, it's a different story. Do you mind just telling me in your own words about what you saw last time and anything you've noticed this trip?"

My opinion of Mr Bolton's shrewdness continued to rise as I noticed his close attention to my tale, and how much to the point his questions were. Every now and then he stopped me while he made a jotting in a fat, little brown-leather pocket-book, and at the end he observed—

"Well, Mr Merton, it's a queer case, but I dare say I may be able to throw a bit of light on things before I've done."

I wondered very much, and from the look on his face I do not believe for a moment that he saw a single blink of light at that time.

"And now," said he, "com-

ing to this explosion, I don't want to hear anything more about the flames and smoke and such like. All that is for the Navy people. It doesn't come under the head of my department, Mr Merton; but this buying of stuff ashore and taking parcels aboard the ship —that does come under it. In fact that's what I'm up here to investigate, for it's pretty clear, even to a man like me that knows nothing of ships, that any one on this island couldn't swim out and hold a match to a ship o' war and blow her up that way! If it *was* done from here, it must have been by one of those parcels."

"Obviously," I agreed. "And I also agree that it's for the experts to decide whether a bomb could be slipped into a paper parcel of butter, or a large cheese, or anything else they bought — and for you simply to find out exactly what was bought and who sold it."

"A paper parcel of butter and a large cheese," he repeated. "Did you happen to see any of those things being sold yourself?"

"I happened to pass some bluejackets who had just bought them."

He made me tell him exactly the circumstances of my seeing the men and my passing Peter and Jock previously—precisely, in fact, as I have told it in this account. He thought for a few moments in silence after I had finished, and then asked me if I knew definitely of any other people who had sold anything to the sailors.

"I happen to know for certain of Dr Rendall and his cousin, Mr Philip Rendall—or rather Mr Philip Rendall's farmer; but from all I saw and all I heard I fancy the difficulty will be to find a house that did not sell something."

He nodded thoughtfully.

"That's exactly the difficulty," he said, and then he rose and held out his hand. "Good-night, Mr Merton, I'm much obliged to you, and I'll promise you to make an excuse for looking you up very soon again and letting you know how I am getting on. By the way, you had better tell the doctor I was much interested in your account of how the explosion happened. That will account for my calling again."

"I must have detective instincts myself," I smiled. "I had already thought of the same lie."

In fact it came in very handy no later than Mr Bolton's departure that night. The doctor wondered very much what the detective had to say to his patient that took him so long to tell, and his curiosity was satisfied as per arrangement.

X. WHERE THE CLUE LED.

I saw nothing of Bolton next day, nor as a matter of fact did I expect to. Indeed, when he called for me on the morning after, it was a good deal sooner than I had counted on. The doctor was out, so no fable was necessary, and I took him into

the smoking-room and offered him an easy-chair.

"Well, Mr Bolton, any news?" I inquired.

He remained standing, and shook his head at the chair.

"I've no time to sit down," he said, "but I thought I'd just look in as I passed."

There was a note in his voice that made me look at him sharply.

"Have you discovered anything?" I asked.

He nodded his head slowly.

"Not very much, Mr Merton, but something."

Yet there seemed to be a hint of jubilation in his eye.

"Won't you tell the other terrier?"

His face relaxed a little, and for a moment I half thought he was going to confide in me, and then he said—

"It's a little too soon to say much. But I'm on the track of something, I don't mind admitting—something pretty surprising too, if it's the right track. Possibly I may be able to tell you more to-night. Could you come out this evening with me if I needed you?"

"Rather!"

"Well," he said, moving towards the door, "any time after dark I may look in—if this leads to anything."

"Even if it doesn't, look in and put me out of suspense, like a good fellow 'tec,' Mr Bolton."

He smiled again. Evidently he was decidedly pleased with himself this morning.

"All right, Mr Merton. I'll do that much for you."

Just before I opened the door for him I had one last shot.

"Won't you even give me a hint, Mr Bolton?"

He looked at me for a moment, and then said in a low voice (for we were near the door)—

"There's some one in this island who hasn't lived in it all their life—not by any means. I've found that out."

He nodded significantly at me, but his lips closed tight again, and I saw there was no more to be got out of him, so I wished him luck and returned to my chair to think.

Whether excitement at the prospect of actually reaching the crisis of this adventure that very night, or chagrin at seeing the problem which had eluded me solved straight off by this great drover of a fellow was my uppermost feeling, I should be afraid to say. I know both were strongly mingled, and for a few minutes it never even occurred to me to question whether the man really was within sight of a solution. And then I began to wonder.

Who was this mysterious person who had not lived all "their" life on the island? He had concealed, probably deliberately, "their" sex. And was it then a fact of which I myself was unaware? Bolton said he had found it out. But it might be no news to me. I thought of several people, a woman and at least two men, who had certainly lived a considerable part of their lives out of the island. But there was no use speculating with the test so near at hand.

All the same, I felt so restless that I should have gone out to

walk it off there and then had it not been for the fear that I might chance to follow in Bolton's tracks and lead him to think I was doing it deliberately. At all costs I wanted him to see that I was playing the game (as I was playing it), so I waited till after our early dinner and then set off.

I well remember the day, a nasty raw specimen of March weather, not exactly raining, but trying to all the time, and altogether grey and dismal. The spring ploughing was proceeding apace, and, as the fields grew brown, there was less and less trace of colour left in the landscape. In fact it was a day when something evil could scarcely help happening, or at least it seems so looking back.

I walked briskly to keep the chill out, following the winding road, but so wrapt in my thoughts that I hardly noticed where I was going till I found myself passing from the metalled highway on to the rough track that led one beyond the last of the farms out to the desolate stretch of country at the nor'-west end of the island. At both sides, and especially on the north, the rocks rose here till they became genuine cliffs, not very high, but rugged and broken, with little hollows dipping down through them here and there, and giving scrambling access to small coves. I kept along near this northern cliff line, still thinking all the while, until with a start and a quickening of my heart I became abruptly conscious of a figure fifty yards or so ahead.

I had a sudden dim recollection; he seemed disturbingly familiar, and then in a moment I recognised Jock, though why the sight of Jock should rouse a disturbing thought was more than I could say. When I saw him he was close to one of those little dips, but whether he had been down at the shore or not I could not say, for up to that instant I had been quite inattentive. But in any case Jock was such a chronic, aimless wanderer that his appearance anywhere never surprised his acquaintances.

Evidently he recognised the harmless, eccentric Mr Hobhouse quickly enough, for he broke into a shambling trot and came towards me with an unusual air of eagerness.

"Stones!" he cried as he came up to me. "Jock knows stones!"

"Stones?" said I genially. "Dear me, Jock, this is great news. Are these the stones?" and I pointed to the rocks all about us.

"Stones here!" cried Jock, pointing eagerly across towards the other side of the promontory, and catching me by the arm in a friendly way.

I had never seen the creature so excited before, and for a moment could make neither head nor tail of it. And then I remembered. On my last visit to the knoll near the Scollays', Jock had been watching me, and by way of playing my part thoroughly I had affected a vast interest in certain large slabs of stone showing here and there through the grass. Looking at stones was the last thing I was keen about

this afternoon, but there was simply no resisting Jock. With the air of a pleased child he led me in the way he wished me to go, only letting go my arm when he saw I really meant to inspect his stones.

"This is an unusual exhibition for Jock," I thought, but in the character of Mr Hobhouse there was nothing for it but pretending high gratification and going where he led me.

The promontory was about a third of a mile across at this point, and when we had made this journey my intelligent guide triumphantly pointed out a few ordinary boulders at the end of it. They were large, it is true, but there their merits ended. However, I examined them with every appearance of pleasure, thanked Jock effusively and even gave him a sixpence, and at last bade him good-day and started for home.

It had been a queer little episode, and had I been in my usual clue-hunting humour I should no doubt have dissected it carefully—and then abused myself for being a fanciful fool. But this afternoon I had too much else to think of, and the incident passed out of my mind in the meantime.

At tea I prepared the doctor for the possibility of my going out at night by a long-winded, babbling, and entirely fictitious account of Bolton's morning call, from which it appeared that Mr Bolton was so interested in Mr Hobhouse's account of how he saw the ship blow up that he would probably call in the evening to verify certain particulars, and might even want Mr Hobhouse to come with him to the house where he was lodging. And then after tea I smoked and read and waited.

Darkness was beginning to fall when we finished tea that night, and the lamps were lit when we went into the smoking-room. At any moment the summons might come, and yet eight o'clock struck, and nine, and ten, and I even induced the doctor to sit up till after eleven, but still there was no sign of Bolton. And then at last I said some severe things to myself about the man, and we went to bed.

Next morning was equally chilly and dismal, and after the doctor went out to visit a case, I sat over the fire, resolved to stay there till Mr Bolton came and explained himself. I stayed there all morning, but he never came, and no more did Dr Rendall. Our dinner hour approached and passed, and at last I sat down and had my meal alone. I had just finished when I heard the front door open sharply and the doctor's step in the passage. It struck me instantly as curiously quick for him. He entered the dining-room, and I saw at once that something was very much the matter.

"Bolton has been murdered," he said abruptly. "His body has just been found in the sea."

(*To be concluded.*)

WITH THE AMERICAN TROOP CONVOY.

THE pilots have been dropped, the lightship is out of sight astern, and gradually the sky-scrapers of New York dip one by one below the horizon. Just a yellow rim of land is still visible to the north, as the great convoy forms up on its guide. Everything has been thought out beforehand —each ship knows her appointed place, her speed and course, so that little signalling is necessary. This is just as well, for the weather has changed, and as the great concourse of ships sweeps forward with increasing speed, the first heavy clap of thunder crashes out, and in a few moments the torrential rains have blotted out all but the nearest vessels. Crash follows crash, flash succeeds flash for thirty-six hours, while the rain continues to fall almost without intermission. At night the darkness is intense, except when the jagged lightning illumines the convoy, and shows labouring ships and white foam-tossed waters. It is good weather for making a departure, and baffles the submarines. For days the latter have been harrowing the New Orleans coast to the southward, and in the morning we hear a "U"-boat has been sighted to the north of us: we have passed each other in the storm, and this particular Fritz at least will not be able to overtake or trouble us.

But the duties of Commodore of a convoy, especially a troop one, are always anxious, though intensely interesting work.

There are a thousand other perils besides the constant one of submarines. He has, perhaps, under his charge 40,000 human souls, with from 10 to 20 great vessels verging upon 600 feet long, and carrying, in addition to troops, hundreds of thousands of tons of the most valuable cargo and foodstuffs. The front of quite a small convoy will spread over several miles of sea, and if ships do not keep perfect station and well closed up, the convoy will also be several miles in depth. All this great concourse has to manœuvre as one ship, to zigzag together, to go at the same speed. With ships so close, the slightest mistake on the part of some junior and inexperienced officer may well bring two floating masses of metal weighing together 40,000 tons crashing into each other. Things work *so* smoothly, safe navigation *looks* so easy, when properly performed, that the landsman is quite unable to realise that there is any danger at all. But just one little mistake, and there comes a blinding crash, and in a few moments two great ships will be settling beneath the waves, bearing with them their crushed human freights. In the early summer months, in that part of the Atlantic where the cold Lab-

rador Current and the warm Gulf Stream meet, fogs are prevalent. Fog alone is of itself a danger, with a score or more great vessels driving blindly through it in company; and in war-time speed cannot be reduced, however thick the cloud-blanket. But there is a greater peril than the fog, for somewhere about there are thousands of tons of floating ice. May, June, and July are the perilous months when the great bergs come hustling along the Labrador coast, and thence move out into the Atlantic, sometimes reaching as far east as to be within sight of the Azores before they finally melt in the warmer waters. Since the day when the *Titanic* went down, shore-going humanity has gradually been forgetting this peril among the greater horrors of war: but it exists, and it always *must* exist on the west side of the Atlantic, when the first summer sunshine breaks up the iron-bound, frozen waters of the North, and the cold current which sets down the coast bears the ice-packs to the southward, often at the rate of four miles an hour. They are so vast that they are constantly seen aground in sixty fathoms (360 feet) of water. Even if your ship is stopped until the fog lifts, she is not safe against them; for the cold current often runs under and across the warm one, and these monsters are so deep they can come sailing along against a gale and the run of surface water. The general limits of the ice at various times of the year is well known, but there is never any certainty about its exact position. Some captains have sailed the Atlantic for forty years without ever seeing a berg — others have crashed blindly into one on their first voyage. Is it strange that sailors are sometimes fatalistic? But picture a convoy running into dense fog in these waters, and realise that the Commodore's work is not without anxiety.

But at last the Western zone of fogs and possible ice is past, and we are sailing along with a fresh following westerly wind, with blue skies and bluer seas. The Gulf Stream is still under our keels however, adding perhaps thirty miles to each day's run, but with gradually diminishing velocity. The water is warm, somewhere above the seventies, and innumerable is the marine life disporting itself in it. Undersea life, whether natural or of the artificial German type, bears an uncanny resemblance all the world over. A porpoise, — dashing straight headlong at the ship,—smacks unpleasantly of a torpedo; while the rising black-fish, blowing as she tops a wave, makes the heart miss a beat until further inspection has assured the startled faculties that the monster is a fleshy and not a tin submarine.

The troops, who have hitherto sprawled lengthwise on the decks, like kelp at low water, now rouse themselves from the torpor of "mal-de-mer," and

light a tentative cigarette. The Y.M.C.A. young man arises from the depths of a darkened cabin and commences to inaugurate sports, which are taken up so eagerly, and with such ferocity of fear-provoking college yells and American catcalls, that we pray for bad weather again. A Special Thanksgiving service is suggested, but on a hint from the Captain that the convoy has not yet even entered the real danger zone, it is deferred until a later date not yet decided upon. And so we pass along the mid-Atlantic, while the temperature gradually falls, the more nearly we approach the British Isles. For three days the convoy is once more enveloped in fog. Each ship hangs out a fog-buoy astern, which she tows at a distance of about a cable (200 yards). This shows as a white wave on the surface of the water, and enables the following ship to keep in touch, when her next ahead is shut out by the fog. The moon is at the full, and it is light all night, as the silent convoy speeds through the spectral mists. Thousands of beings are all around you, yet nothing is visible; it is as still as the grave save for the churning screws and the beating of the waves. Suddenly the look-outs report "fog-buoy right ahead." Its white wave is clearly visible as we gradually overtake it, until it is abreast the bridge, only thirty or forty yards distant. We must be right on top of another ship! The syren is sounded loudly, and the electric navigation lights blink through the white fog as the master-switch is put on. But the white wave turns and shears off to starboard; it is gone! But stay! *Is* it a fog-buoy? There *is* no ship ahead of us, for we are the leading ship and in the centre of the line, and our companions on either beam are now just looming up in the ghostly moon-lit fog. Then there is only *one* thing it can be—a "U"-boat. A "U"-boat whom we have overtaken in the fog, proceeding on the surface awash, and who dived for dear life, and with precious little hope of life, when we sounded the syren and put on our lights. Needles are found in haystacks, I presume, for that would be a less extraordinary chance than that which has happened to us—for the centre of a convoy to pass within thirty yards of a "U"-boat in a dense fog in mid-Atlantic. But so it is, and had we given but one touch to our helm with knowledge—there would have been one "Fritz" less to trouble civilisation.

Grey seas and a leaden sky, where the wind comes tearing from the N.W. We are hundreds of miles from land, but a score of telescopes anxiously search the horizon in every direction, and presently a little, heaving, grey dot is visible on the starboard bow. A minute more and a dozen are visible along the eastern horizon: it is the escort flotilla spread to intercept us. A few minutes, and they are spread along our flanks and ahead and

astern of us, like bees buzzing round a comb. The gale which has favoured us has been in their teeth, and they have had a sad tossing; they are nothing loath to turn and run with us before it. We are in the real danger zone now, and it gives us a strong feeling of satisfaction to see those little grey lances of destroyers, tossing in perpetual motion, on every hand. If a ship is torpedoed now, we at least have the comfort of knowing that the submarine will have a hot time of it, and that, if our ship sinks, we shall not be left to drown or starve unaided on the ocean. Before we met the destroyer escort we knew that might be our fate—for the convoy would have gone on like a herd of hunted buffaloes, leaving the wounded ship to the mercy of the hunter. Big ships may never stop to assist other torpedoed big ships, lest they themselves also become a victim. A British seaman must still all the dictates of humanity which impel him to help his sinking friend. The British Navy learned that lesson once for all in the early days of the war, when the three cruisers, *Cressy*, *Hogue*, and *Aboukir*, fell victims in one short half-hour to a single submarine.

And so the big convoy moves on, zigzagging always while there is a gleam of light. The green mountains of Ireland are sighted and passed, the narrower waters of the Irish Sea are threaded, but the tension never for a second relaxes, for the nearer our destination, the greater the peril; and now the danger of mines is added to that of the nimble torpedo. Small silvery dirigibles come sailing out to meet us. Seaplanes and aircraft of all sorts come darting from behind projecting headlands: they hover awhile ahead of the convoy, then disappear once more into the fathomless distance. Last but not least, that most useful of nautical spies, the kite-balloon, precedes us, towed by its fast-moving patrol craft, to which it is attached by a wellnigh invisible gossamer thread.

But the last zigzag is done —the convoy uncoils and straightens out, the pilots are got aboard, and we are steaming the last few miles, which a cloud of smoking trawlers have just seen swept clean of mines, and now roll their ungainly way up the muddy estuary. The factory chimneys and the smoke of a great town are near. To-night we shall sleep in peace: sleep none the less profound for perils past, and the fact that for the last three days and nights no captain has left his bridge. Now is the time for our Y.M.C.A. young man to give his "Thanksgiving" service; but —alas for the frailty of human nature!—our Yankee friends can think now of nothing more spiritual than the sights of London town! There let us leave them, imbibing the intangible charm of "Blighty," of that old country which seems to them to be as much their home as ours, and which is calling to them from the back of a thousand years.

RUPERT STANLEY.

A SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY PACIFIST.

I.

IMAGINE to yourself a thick quarto volume—plump if not clumsy, and filling the palm of the hand, bound as if for the use of posterity in the toughest of leather, and the pages covered with writing in a trim Chancery hand. There you have in a glance the book of Justinian Pagitt's works and days wherein he wrote many odd things "for the ease of his memory," and without knowing it for the entertainment of our own.

He was born in or about the year 1610 at the village of Tottenham, being the eldest son of James Pagitt, "whome," to use the words graven on his tomb, "his owne worth and Prince's favour lighted to the dignity of a Baron of His Majesty's Exchequer, in whome birth, merit, place made up the body of unblemished honour. He was the prudent husband of three wives, by the first the provident father of four sons, a secure master of himself and a sincere servant of God. His life was a well acted story of himselfe. His death a willing passage to Glorie. He died in the years of nature 57; Grace 1638."

This good man belonged to the branch of the Pagitt family which for some two centuries had been settled at Cranford and Barton Seagrave in the county of Northampton,—a quiet race of men whose ambitions in life were satisfied as it seems with the begetting of male children and with the sending of the eldest with unfailing monotony to the law *vid* Christ Church and the Middle Temple, and the youngest through Magdalen to the cure of souls. Justinian, therefore, by the very choice of his name, by the custom of his house, and by the fact that his father was a judge and his mother a daughter of the Dean of the Arches, had but little choice in the destination of his life; born *in gremio legis*, he was devoted from the outset to the dusty purlieus of the law.

II.

Of his infancy and earlier youth the manuscript gives no account; we enjoy life too well at that age to burden it with notes. The beginning is at Christ Church, and even here the material is thin. There are some pages of scholastic notes and memoranda of lectures heard which testify to his application—and one may guess from his after life that he was sober and painstaking to an unpopular degree. He never figures in a college fray. For his sole recreation he seems to have walked over to Magdalen Hall to hear Dr Henshaw

preach, and then, returning to his rooms, to have bolted the door and written the sermon down. Perhaps he was a little unfortunate in following two kinsmen of very brilliant parts. The fame of Ephraim Pagitt was still fresh in the college memory, who while a student was able to speak in fifteen different tongues, and by his eleventh year had already translated and published Lavater's 'Sermons upon Ruth.' And there were some hoary-headed dons who could recall the angelic wisdom and grace of Eusebius Pagitt, his uncle, whose discourses in high philosophy earned him the name of "the golden sophister." It was a little trying for Justinian to be reminded of these two. A plodder can scarcely hope to vie with supermen.

If college life proved uncongenial, he found some comfort, I think, and some outlet for his natural piety in the acquaintance of Dr Richard Corbett, successively student and Dean of Christ Church, and at that time Bishop of Oxford. One almost wonders at their knowing each other, for the Bishop, according to contemporary accounts, was "the delight of all ingenious men, and the most celebrated wit in the university." In his youth he had been the convivial friend of Ben Jonson, and boasted of having revelled and versified in all the taverns of London. It is doubtful if he ever emerged from his youth, for after becoming a doctor of divinity he donned a leather jerkin and sang ballads at Abingdon Cross. Nor did the cares of a diocese depress him. Aubrey says that after service in the Cathedral "he would sometimes take the key of his wine cellar, and he and his chaplain, Washington, would go and look themselves in and be merry. Then first he layes down his episcopal hat, There layes the doctor. Then he puts off the gowne — There lyes the bishop. Then 'twas Here's to thee Corbett and Here's to thee Washington."

I wonder if the puritanical Pagitt knew of all this as he sat in the bishop's house adjoining the Folly bridge? Probably not, for they had quieter things in common. The bishop was a poet — the best, as some one has said, of all the bishops of England —and Justinian too was possessed of a juvenile muse. On one page of this book he has copied out some exquisitely tender lines composed by Corbett for the third birthday of Vincent, his only son:—

"What I shall leave thee none can tell,
Yet all shall say I wish thee well.
I wish thee, Vin, before all wealth
Both bodily and goastly health;
Not too much meanes nor witt come to thee,
Too much of either may undo thee.
I wish thee learninge not for showe
But truly to instruct and knowe:
Not such as Gentlemen require
To prate at table or at fier;
I wish thee all thy mother's graces,
Thy father's fortune and his places;
I wish thee friends and one at Court
Not to build on, but to support;
Not to helpe thee in doing many
Oppressions but from suffering any.
I wish thee peace in all thy wayes,
Not lazy, not contentious dayes,
And when thy soule and body parte
As innocent as now thou arte."

Even the magic of these verses could not avail, for only one of these good wishes did Vincent bring to pass. "A very handsome youth," says Aubrey, "but he is run out of all and goes begging up and down to gentlemen in the streets."

The rest is silence.

III.

In the year 1628 Pagitt went down from Oxford without taking his degree. With all their learning, the "golden sophister" and the polyglottist had done the same. It was another custom of their family. He seems to have returned to his father's house at Tottenham High Cross, and to have read there for the Bar. He becomes more earnest than ever. It was naturally the time for making great resolutions, for framing syllabuses of mental development and rules of social demeanour. The notebook grows more intimate, serving almost the use of a confessional. Into tiny one-inch squares he crams the doings and misdoings of each day, using for the purpose a curious abbreviated jargon of English and Latin, or whichever will squeeze best into the space — as, for example, "Meditatio de Lawyer's Life et Officer's deut: Preces et lectio biblica: Walke in fieldes: In confabulation cum amicis: Too much bookishnesse: Somnolentia peccavi." Sometimes one has just a glimpse of the outer world. There are three pages of interesting notes upon the Duke of Buckingham's assassination (1628),[1] a sentence or two doubting the king's wisdom in making Laud Primate of all England (1633), and an account of two vacations (1630 and 1632) spent in the cathedral of Winchester and along the lanes of Warwickshire. But in the main he is hopelessly introspective and quite oblivious of the shadows creeping over the face of England.

Some more elaborate entries of the time, carefully tabulated, under the heading *Examen Salutis Meae*, make the quaintest reading:—

1. "I do often eate too much at suppers which makes me ill and drowsie the next morning.
2. I do not carry myself with so much circumspecion as I should do but am too familiar with Sophie which may diminish my self respect.
3. I *must* forbear to contradict my father with my tongue. I must not meddel with his janglings with the servants.

[1] After Felton had assassinated the Duke of Buckingham, his name was anagrammatised thus: "John Felton. No; flie not." Pagitt takes a careful note of this.

4. I have spoaken irreverently concerning the Ministers of God and indifferently censured them and their sermons. I have been weary and drowsy at sermons many times minding and earnestly desiring humain witt in them than endeavouring to reape a spirituall benefit from the heavenly doctrines.
5. I have much doubted concerning heaven and hell 1633 26 Novembris.
6. I have been inclined to pompous and stately musick in churches and have derided them that spoaken against it.
7. I lay a bed musing till 9 o'clock which caused a dulness in my head with losse of so much time. *Resolve* that wakening at 5 o'clock I will knock with my bedstaff to waken Elias who shall presently rise and make a fire whilst I rubb my body and then I will presently skip out of bed." A note in the margin adds, "I must have ye tinder-box with me."
8. Query is not playing on the viol immediately after meales hurtfull by reason that it stirres ye fancy and bringeth a grate [*i.e.*, flush] into my face.
9. Resolve to skip-rope each morning at six o'clock.
10. *De arte saltandi.* I must study not to daunce loftily so much as to carry ye body sweetly and smoothly away with a graceful conportment. In some places hanging steps are very graceful and give much ease and time to breathe.[1]
11. I am too grave at cards to play with women. Ergo I must winke at escapes," &c. &c.

That is just what he could not do. I doubt if Justinian winked or was even whimsically inclined in all his life. These heart-searchings and struggles for self-perfection throw indirectly a shrewd light upon the oddity of his nature. Was ever man so ineradically grave? With women especially he was as unbending as an Anabaptist—and that to them, as he learned, is the unpardonable sin. Not finding any logical reason for their existence or their peculiarities, his natural instinct as a lawyer was to mistrust them one and all. And soon an event came to pass which increased his suspicions tenfold, and distracted him sadly from following the Golden Rule. In brief, the old man, his father, Baron Pagitt, took it into his head to marry again — for the third time. At his age such a step seemed rather uncalled for, and was hardly redeemed by the symmetrical propriety of his choice — the lady Mazaretta

[1] In the reign of James I. barristers were put out of commons for the offence of neglecting to dance before the judges; nor will this appear so very extraordinary when it is recollected that the very judges themselves were accustomed to dance at the antique masques and revels of their respective Inns

having previously had two husbands, as he had had two wives. The match really was not so equal as it looked, for age was in her favour, and her tongue had slain two husbands, and could slay a hundred more. Moreover, she was the daughter of a lawyer, and had three hedgehogs on her coat of arms. There was no question here of the survival of the fittest.

Now Justinian, as the eldest son by the first wife, was naturally furious. He was persuaded that this creature had set her cap at his father—that she coveted not his affection but his fortune. To his jaundiced eyes every change she made in the household was but further evidence of this. At the same time he had not the courage to accuse her before his father. The position was a delicate one, and he was always timid. So he went on accumulating the evidence in his book of remembrance, and relieved his feelings in that way.

IV.

Here are some of the entries under the headings, "*Audita et Animadversiones de Matre meâ:* Oeconommical Affaires: The chief complaints against my mother:—

1. "We often have rotten lamb, bad beefe of 16d a stone and tuff mutton at 4/- a quarter.
2. The joynts being small she causes them to be but halfe roasted which cannot be so wholsome for my father.
3. She repines wheneas any of my ffathers ffriends come to meales, *e.g.* my sister coming once at 1 o'clock she sayd: 'I hoape she is not comme to dinner.'
4. She causes my father's shirts to be washt in the bucket but her owne smocks are washt by ye hand.
5. She allowes my father nothing to his breakfaste but loathsome mingled butter.
6. She causes ye maide to fetch butter by penniworths at ye chandlers which our neighbours jeere at to my father's disgrace.
7. She is basely sparing of pepper and mustard scarcely allowing any.
8. She so imployes the maydes in making her petticoats that they cannot mende my linen.
9. She buyeth stale breade, saying we eate it up apace when new. This Joyce told me.
10. This day at dinner my mother told my father that ye dinner cost three shillings. But ye cookmaid after dinner told my brother, that though she did laye out 3s this day at market, halfe ye fishe, halfe ye eggs, a quart of vinegar, a quarter of ye butter and some other thinges were not sent in to dinner.

11. When Parson Holt read to us that Solomon had men-singers and women-singers she bid my father mark that and bid him remember *women-singers*. Whereby I conceive she meant that she would have Miss Woodson waite on *her* and send my father for an organist."

Nothing you see comes amiss. And though himself a lawyer he will employ hearsay evidence at third hand against his mother. Look at this!—

12. "My father told Joyce who told Elias who told me that his ruffle was now startched very charily and his linen but rarely mended by reason of the maydes' ever spinning and knitting. The cook-mayd told me likewise she could not have time from knitting to even wash the trenchers."

As if in desperation at the sight of this page of complaints, he prepares for action: "The longer she is suffered to go on in this course," he argues to himself, "the greater leade she will get, and perhaps tye my father's heade so straight under her apron-strings that it will be hereafter difficult to get him away." A moment later he begins to shrink from the task in hand. He makes another prim list of "Inconveniences which might arise if I shoulde informe my father concerning my mother's misdoings and meannesses."

1. "She would use what means she could by lying and spreading tales against me.
2. I shall not have my linen washt or mended well." Note in the margin, "This may be remedied by having my cloathes washed abroade."
3. She hath *alreadye* tied my father's hedd so straight under her strings that he would not credit my information."

V.

This sort of domestic fray could have but one conclusion, for the stepmother controlled the supplies. Justinian is discreetly silent on the ultimate encounter, but the fact of his discomfiture is clear. He does not even capitulate; he runs away. On the 21st May 1634, with his brother Thomas for companion, he takes lodgings in Battersey till Term commences, and then applies for chambers in the Middle Temple, where the name of Pagitt had been honoured many a hundred years.

On June 15, upon paying £40 to the new buildings, then in course of erection, the brothers were granted admission to "the chambers, studies and woodhouses in Elm Court, on the second floor

eastward." In the note-book Justinian has a separate heading: "How to contrive our chambers in Elm Court," and among other details there is a precise plan showing where their respective belongings and books are to go—*e.g.*, "Places to hang gownes and dublets, a faire place to hang my robes in; A catalogue of things to be bought to furnish our new chamber," with a list of *Necessaria*, which includes, "Candlesticks, *e.g.*, Mr Coles Iron Candlestick, Bellows, fier showell, tongs, pair of globes, cushions," &c., and a list of *Necessaria Non*, which includes "a devise of greene glasse to preserve my eyes by candle light."

I fancy these glasses were purchased after all,—they would have suited him so well. For it is quite clear that in spite of his stepmother's rocks of offence the main current of his life ran on unchanged. If anything he became more pragmatical than before, declining to swerve a hand's-breadth from his habitual way without legal or ancestral precedent. He allows himself just once to be fined for "missing Mr Hatton's reading," but then his father and grandfather had done the same. Otherwise he was perfect.

In the pages entitled "*Examen diurnum vitae meae*" in his book you may observe him daily immersed in Bracton, Lyttelton, and the common law, and in sermons deeper still. Twice a week he goes to hear the preachments of Dr Michlethwaite, the Master of the Temple, and afterwards he digests them into his book. It is to be hoped he took some profit from them, for the learned Doctor complained of getting none. In the Temple records for the year 1635 you will find him demanding "recompense for his afternoon sermons and pains in the forenoons beyond his predecessors. But the bench decide that nothing is due or can be claimed in respect of supernumerary sermons."

About this time Pagitt seems to have made the acquaintance of another Justinian Pagitt, minister of the English congregation at Amsterdam. This gentleman being much exercised about Church discipline, sends twenty propositions for the consideration of Thomas Hooker of Esher, who was then said to be "the oracle and expediall library of the younger clergy." Some of the propositions are referred to in our manuscript—*e.g.*, "Whether it is lawfull for any to resort unto the public meetings of the Brownists, and to communicate with them?" The answer is pat: "*Negative.* Sinful and utterly unlawful."

VI.

Reading Pagitt's journal, you would hardly believe that the Middle Temple was one of the wildest communities then existing. What a pity he was too decorous to take a part or

even to tell us what he must have seen or heard. As it is, we are left to the statutes of the Inn, where, in sententious terms, the students' offences are recited and penalties enacted. In Pagitt's first year it becomes necessary to provide "that no gentleman shall come into the hall or place of public prayer with hats, cloaks, boots, spurs, swords or daggers, or shall wear long hair." A catalogue is made of those "chief stirrers of mutiny" who had resolved to continue these practices; but, as you may guess, Justinian's name is not to be looked for there. The following year it is decreed that no dicing shall be used in time of divine service; that no one shall presume to take violently from the steward, butler, cook, or any other servant, any wine, tobacco, or provisions, or to hinder and interrupt the service of the house. Moreover, the gate in Essex Court leading towards the tavern shall be barred up till further order. Of individual misdemeanours there is no end. It is recorded, to the prejudice of one Richard Devey, that a young woman came to his door and delivered a bastard child, whereupon Richard ran away, and was not heard of again, and the aged Masters, to save the reputation of the Inn, were left to suckle the child.

Not long after this, Pagitt's neighbour Freeman was expelled "for calling one Wm. Peele, a student of brushes [presumably an artist], into his chambers, forcing him on pain of instant death to utter profane speeches and execrations against his will and conscience," and threatening, when it was over, "that he should be pumped and cut in pieces if he dared to complain."

These disorders, or "unsufferable enormities" as they were termed, came to a head about Christmastide in Pagitt's fourth year, and led to the following manifesto from the Bench: "Whereas the licentious expensiveness of some gentlemen excells all reasonable limits and begets clamour against the Society, and other disorders and abuses in later years have more and more crept in and have grown to such a height that the misgovernment of these times is become a public scandal whereof the judges and State take notice and press hard for reformation. Now the Masters of the Bench for vindicating the ancient honour of the Society and for removing reproach from their government have ordered that no Christmas shall be held this year within the House but that the company shall dissolve. Meanwhile every gentleman may dispose of himself at his own discretion and liberty."

A vain display of authority as the sequel shows: "For notwithstanding the order aforesaid, divers gentlemen with their swords drawn in a contemptuous and riotous manner assembled in St. Thomas' Eve, broke open by violence the doors of the hall, butlery and kitchen," and proceeded to revel and drink, and dice. An officer of the bench

who came in with a seasonable desire for peace and goodwill among men was carried out and placed in the common stocks. Where do you think was Pagitt on that night of nights? Mending his hose perhaps, or cogitating upon contingent remainders, or more likely wondering what he should do if the rioters came his way. He writes down here in the book his resolve if he be challenged to a duel, "I will reply in the words which a wise man used to the braggart Antonius, 'If Antonius have a desier to loose his life he may finde many other meanes beside this,' and another answer I could make were this, 'I will not venture an old angell to a crackt groath.'" With this resolution in his heart and with cotton-wool stuffed in his ears, this seventeenth-century pacifist continues his studies, and offers when the uproar has subsided, to serve on the standing committee appointed by the Bench "*ne quid respublica societatis detrimenti caperet.*"

VII.

This is the place perhaps to review Pagitt's correspondence or such of it as figures in his book. As one might expect, the letters are most elaborate affairs, composed with infinite pains from two-and-twenty "rules of the epistolary art," with preliminary drafts and corrections without end. But for all that they contain much interesting matter. The first is written to his cousin, James Harrington, on January 28, 1633, when he was attached to the Middle Temple but not in residence as yet. After conveying his warmest affection to "Mrs Anne," regulator of his cousin's household, who had a pleasant custom of keeping him in pastries and plum-cake, he adds: "Mr Prynne of Lincoln Inne hathe lately sett forth a booke intitled *Histrio-Mastrix, or the Player's Scourge*, the sale of which is prohibited, and he to appeare at the High Commission on Thursday next. I will if you desier it send you a more particular relacion. His booke is extraordinarily stufft with quotations of old authors which they say are his only argument.[1] It is observable that his booke was published the next day after the Queen's Pastorall at Somerset House. *P.S.*—Will you please lend me Sir Kenelm Digby's Mathematical discourses."

On Candlemas Day the same year the four Inns of Court presented a masque before the King and Queen, in order to counteract the effect of Prynne's book and confute his opinion against stage plays. One almost feels they did but

[1] Prynne boasts in his preface that he has cited no less than 55 Synods and Councils, 70 Fathers and Christian writers before 1200, 150 foreign and domestic, Protestant and Popish authors since, and 40 Heathen Philosophers.

strengthen his case—at least in so far as his charges of prodigality and waste were concerned; for they determined to make such a masque as had never been seen before and of which the like would never be seen again. They succeeded. They pleased the King. They made the Puritans rage. They staggered posterity. And this in the four hours of one night at a trifling cost of twenty-one thousand pounds.

Those who take pleasure in pageants of this kind should turn to the Memorials of Bulstrode Whitelocke of the Middle Temple, who served with Edward Hyde, later Lord Chancellor of England, Mr Attorney Noy, and the learned John Selden on the Committee of Management. In his pages, decked out with a sumptuous array of courtly words and gilded phrase, there is a noble account "of this the most glorious and splendid shew that ever was held in England." He tells of the wonderful company of lute-players, and performers on bagpipes and horns that he collected, and of the incidental music written by Lawes and the Queen's musicians from France. He describes the procession of proper and beautiful young gentlemen, of whom some walked and some rode, "borrowing the King's best horses and richest saddles," from Chancery Lane to the palace of Whitehall. Nor does he hide the inevitable jealousies of the Inns of Court, which drove them at last to throw dice for precedence, and to frame the seats of the Grand-Masquers in the form of an oval, so that none might seem to be preferred.

As one might imagine, the masque "gave great contentment, especially to those of the younger sort and of the female sex"; the queen and her ladies were enthralled. They danced with the masquers till the dawn, praised their fine dresses, and made the king order the same revels for the following night. "And so," says Whitelocke, with something like a sigh, "so are the earthly pomp and glory, if not vanity, soon past and over as if it had never been."

Unfortunately Pagitt neglects to inform us as to the part he took in the show. His appropriate place was certainly in the "Anti-Masque of Birds, wherein was represented a solemn Owl sitting in an ivy bush." But his pen is taken up with grumbling at his share of the expense, and debating anxiously the question of clothes, how and at what cost to strike the balance between magnificence and meanness. After some inquiry, he draws up a statement of "What others have in hand to weare," and decides that, while the black satin favoured by Gray's Inn is rather heavy, the cloth-of-gold dubblet devised by Mr Trevor with scarlet breeches and cloak is beyond all the bounds of modesty. "In buying things against ye maske," he adds, "I was taxed for inconstancy and unsettledness in my resolu-

tion what to buy. I bespoake roses and garters laced with gold and silver lace and afterwards had no use for them." In a letter to another cousin, Tremyll, we find some details of the show itself. "I send you," he says, "a booke of our masque [Shirley's 'Triumph of Peace'] which was presented on Monday last with much applause and commendation from ye King and Queene and all spectators. We all kist ye Queene's hand and then were conducted by my Lord Chamberlain and other Lords to a rich banquet whereto ye King and Queene came and tooke a taste and then graciously smiling upon us left us to the sole enjoying of that well furnished table. Being much taken with ye masque the King sent invitation to us to ride againe on Tuesday next to the Merchant Taylor's Hall, in ye same manner as we rode to Whitehall, to meet his Majesty to supper. Sir Harry Vane[1] and other great Travellers say they never saw such a sight in any part of the world."

VIII.

The other letters deal chiefly with cases in the courts, but are so full of scandal, and so free from legal phrasing, that a layman may enjoy them. I find from the records of the Inn that Pagitt was called to the degree of the Utter Bar in 1635, and was attached later to the northern circuit. Writing from the sessions at Harrogate to his uncle, Sir Thomas Twysden, Doctor of Laws and Chancellor of Lichfield, he says: "I heard likewise one yt went by the name of Dr Bright indicted and convicted for being married to three wives at one time. He had his clergy[2] and was burnt in the hand. There was another convict for a conspiracy who went to one Mr Tine a merchant at the Exchange and threatened to sue him in the spirituall court for having carnel knowledge of a wench whom he had instructed beforehand. Mr Tine having a handsome wife and being unwilling any such thinge should come to her eares, to avoyd jealousy gave him money to be ridd of him, but he came twice afterward for more money. Then Mr Tine being better advised indictes this fellow and he was fined £100, bound to his good behaviour, pillory and imprisonment during ye King's pleasure. Mr Recorder sayd this was now a common trick and that Mr Hooker who writt the Ecclesiasticall Polity was served in the same way."

Another letter (December 1633) refers to the case of Lord Dominic Sarsfield, Justice of

[1] He was at that time Comptroller of the King's Household.

[2] This is rather a late example of the benefit of clergy, though the privilege was not, in fact, abolished till the year 1827.

the Common Pleas of Ireland, who was tried in the Star Chamber and censured, fined, and removed for his misdemeanours to juries, witnesses, and prisoners in open court. Pagitt declares that "On one occasion when two of the Petit jury would not agree the judge sent an officer in to them to say that at another place in his circuit when one of the jury would not agree the rest pulled him by the nose and pinched him till he gave in."

The last case noted by Pagitt is one of *lèse majesté* brought in the King's Bench against a certain Chrogoggen, of whom "it was testified by sundry gentlemen of quality in Drury Lane in London he bitt his thumb saying, 'I care not this much for your King.' And evidence was admitted to show that the prisoner was a man of Spain, in which country the biting of one's thumb is a toaken of scorn in the highest degree, and will bear an action of Disgrace, just as spitting in one's face will in England. He was afterward hanged drawn and quartered for his heinous offence."

IX.

Of Pagitt's own career as a barrister it is difficult to write with confidence at this far stretch of time. He was, as we have seen, a man of infinite pains and not likely to overlook the smallest detail in any case. But we may doubt whether—apart from the family—many briefs came to his hand. He would seem to have felt unsuited for pleading in open court, and to have transferred himself in consequence to the Chancery side. In the seclusion of his own chambers, no doubt, he drafted feoffments without end. There is an elaborate opinion in the manuscript touching the disputed title of his father's lands, and some notes of proceedings taken out by him against his stepmother in the administration of his father's estate. But family briefs and family benefactions are frail things to depend on for a living, as every barrister knows; and besides, "in those crazie and tickle times," to borrow the language of his Inn, no man might carve out the fashion of his life. It was something to find security, let alone success. So the careful Justinian took heed in time and set himself to find a place. He tabulates in his book a dozen "meanes to procure an office and how to be presently placed in one," and makes a list of those gentlemen in the Middle Temple whose influence may be useful—to wit, Selden, Spelman, Harrington, Ireton, and Whitelocke, some of the best men of that day.

His importunities were rewarded at last with the post of *Custos Brevium* and Recorder of the King's Bench. He becomes suddenly an important person. He is beset with a swarm of

suitors begging clerkships in his office; he appraises their merits and demerits as though he were deviling for the Recording Angel in the preparation of his brief for Doomsday, and his judgments are duly entered in the book. Once only does he stretch a point and give a clerkship out of affection, namely, to Elias Ashmole, his cousin, who according to contemporary judgment was "the greatest virtuoso and curioso that ever was known or read of in England before his time." Elias had shared chambers with Justinian in Elm Court for two years while Tom Pagitt went to be Serjeant to the Sumpter; and one finds in his diary a glowing eulogy upon his patron for the appointment. But for all that he resigns it within the month; "the terms are too hard for me," he says.

Then the civil war began. The country was forced to take sides. There were affrays even in the Middle Temple. Justinian's uncle, Sir Roger Twysden, was imprisoned, and Royden Hall sequestered by the Roundheads. His kinsman Sir Justinian Isham was fined two thousand pounds. His venerable cousin, Ephraim Pagitt, was forced to quit St Edmund's in Lombard Street, where he had been rector forty years—"merely for quietness sake," as the official account declared. But as we might suspect, these storms of war passed without breaking over Justinian's head. There was little need to suppress *him* for quietness' sake. All that we hear of him indeed through these noisy years is a humble petition to the Treasury for a larger room in which to keep the records, and a letter in Latin to his brother Tom bewailing the condition of his weakened and emaciated body. "It seems as though, just now, everyone is experimenting on me. The learned gentleman to whom I first had recourse treated me with superb indifference, but the eminent Dr Hinton (physician in ordinary to the King) has prescribed a julep to be taken in the mornings and in the afternoons, a draught of milk mingled with mountain-green that has just been steeped in rose-water. Another advises lozenges for the chest, and Egyptian ointment well rubbed in with a warm hand, while my father-in-law would have me wear a wrap of scarlet flannel, and swallow some powders made of snails. Tell me pray what you think of all these treatments. Yours (carissime frater) in sickness and in health, in life and death. J. P."

X.

This is the place to speak of a more serious change in Justinian's life, which befell some little time before the civil war. If anything it was thrust upon him by his father. About the year 1634 the latter reminded Justinian that he

was the eldest son, and should consider his duty to perpetuate the family name. By way of reply Justinian composes an essay entitled, "The character of the wife I would choose," and closes it with Solomon's bitter sentence, "One man have I found amongst a thousand, but a woman I have not." The years of misery with Mazaretta had plainly soured him against the sex, and he delights to point out to his thrice-married father what contentious and illogical creatures these women are. "Only the other day," he writes, "when I was in the street, I heard one say to another, 'Thou art a whore, a dishonest wretch,' and presently after she did say, 'I am as honest and as good a woman as thyselfe every inch of thee.'"

After a stubborn resistance of two years the forces of nature and family precedent prove stronger than his will; he accepts the suggested hand of Dorcas Willcox, daughter of Richard Willcox, citizen and haberdasher of London, and is married to her on the seventh of July 1636. They go to live in the village of Monken Hadley, at "a very faire house surnamed Ludgraves scytuate in a valley near Enfeylde Chase." The house stands to this day, no longer indeed the home of a Pagitt, but perverted to the use of a preparatory school; or rather one should say "reverted," for even before Pagitt's day the house had been granted to one Francis Atkinson, "who out of a design truly generous and public, endeavouring to prevent the inconvenience of irregulated youth, set up a school or academy here for the education of a select number of Gentlemen's sons of good quality."

Thenceforward honours and infants come thick and fast. A little son is born on the first anniversary of the wedding day, just in time to receive the kiss and the name of his grandfather before the latter dies. Then follow two daughters, a miniature Justinian, and finally boy twins. So the family line was secured. And now having been sufficiently obedient to his father, Justinian settles down to his own devices. He takes on the fashion of a country squire, and extends his domain by buying a portion of the Enfield Chase. He chaffs the neighbouring farmer for consulting an almanac-maker before scything his crop of hay, and is delighted because it pours on the day advised. But he does not himself despise the advice of cousin Ashmole, the astrologer, when his own grass comes to be ripe.

XI.

As it turned out, the sun shone well upon Justinian at this time; for apart from his hay, he is appointed to the Commission of the Peace for the County of Middlesex, Com-

missioner for the Taxes in the same area, and apparently knighted, though his name is not to be found in the official list of knights. He is even selected by the Council of State as a man of capacity to deal with problems of public safety. One finds a letter addressed to him in July 1659 from his old friend Sir James Harrington, at that time President of the Council: "Hearing that a rude multitude from Enfield Town have broken down the hedges of an enclosure, and threaten to cut down the houses as well,[1] we desire you to examine the business, and proceed according to law to suppress the tumult, and in case you require further help, have ordered two troops of horse to be in the neighbourhood to act under your orders for the public good."

A more peaceful honour came to him the following year in the friendship of Samuel Pepys. They met at Westminster Hall for the first time on the 30th August 1660, and dined together at Heaven's coffee-house.[2] It was the love of music that drew them together, for Pagitt was a great player on the organ and the viol, and Pepys was wont to be "transported ravished and soul-enwrapped with all kinds of wind-musique," and could himself play on the flageolet.

Two years later the diarist notes down, "At Lord Sandwich's. Pagitt being there, Will Howe and I and he played over some things of Locke's which pleased us well, it being the first music I have heard for a great while." Again in December of that year, after hearing service in the King's Chapel, they forgather in the same nobleman's house. "Met Howe and Pagitt the Counsellor, an old lover of musique. We sang some Psalms of Mr Lawes and played some symphonies till night. Had great store of good musique." The last record of their meeting is in 1664, when Pepys strolls round to Pagitt's rooms in town and finds him at chamber music "with Dr Walgrave, an Englishman bred at Rome, who plays the best on the lute that I ever heard man."

Of the rest of Pagitt's acts and emoluments there is no record remaining; no annotated sermons of the Hadley Rector, no further comminations against his stepmother, no more *Examen Salutis meae.* Nothing indeed but a blank silence extending over seven years which breaks for a moment on a Latin epitaph and passes into the unbroken silence of the tomb. On the 2nd January 1669 the dust of

---

[1] This disorder was due to the sale and enclosure of Enfield Chase from 1652 onwards, by which the local farmers were deprived of common land which, as they claimed, had been enjoyed for 300 years. Justinian disposed of the matter by appointing a Commission to inquire.

[2] A place of entertainment in Old Palace Yard, on the site of which the Committee Rooms of the House of Commons now stand. It is called in 'Hudibras "False Heaven at the end of the Hall."

Sir Justinian Pagitt, Custos Brevium et Recordorum de Banco Regis was laid to rest in the Church of St Giles-in-the-Fields, close to those chambers in Elm Court where as a youth he had meditated on the mysteries of life and death. Beneath the pride of his coat-of-arms and the humble confidence of his motto, "Deo Restituit," he sleeps securely, where stepmothers cease from troubling and recorders are at rest.

Ten months later his widow slept beside him. Her own memorial is in plain English, and commends her virtues simply by giving the number of her children. As for her sons, Justinian alone survived, and perpetuated the memory of his father by presenting a cottage to the parson and the clerk, and six tenements for the use of decayed householders within the parish of Hadley. The latter, though rebuilt, are still known as the "Pagitt Rooms." One other memorial there is — if one could but discover it—namely, a panegyric poem entitled, *Ad ornatissimum Justinianum Pagitt Arm. Custodem Brevium*, the composition of Payne Fisher, some time Poet-Laureate to the Protector—or, as he styled himself after the Restoration, "the chief scribbler and pamphleteer to His Infernal Majesty." The poem is referred to by Antony Wood as existing in his day, but it never came to be printed, and hitherto my searches have been in vain. It is possible that this portrait-study may attract it to the light.

. . . . . .

As for the lady Mazaretta, the villain of this piece, it must be told that she survived all her enemies and lived victorious to the verge of ninety years. Her career adds one more melancholy example of the good estate of the wicked and the inequitable lot of mortals here below. For while the soft pliable natures have but a few days on the earth, and mostly in the shade, the wicked seem to bask, like the bay-trees, in the sun of uncounted years. According to her physician, Mazaretta's appetite was enormous to the end.

But where is she now?

REGINALD L. HINE.

ON THE WALL.

BY ZERES.

"Old men who have followed the Eagles since boyhood say that nothing in the Empire is more wonderful than the Wall."

—*Confidences of Parnesius the Centurion in Britain.*

BETWEEN Burma and Assam, and farther to the north between Assam and Thibet, lie a series of wild mountain ranges that are practically unexplored. In these inhospitable and almost trackless regions a steaming tropical sun and an annual rainfall of some two hundred inches both combine to raise dense barriers of Gargantuan vegetation so formidable that pigmy man is often unable to penetrate them. Here and there, however, among their depths live—where it is possible to live at all without being choked by the strangling jungle—a score of different savage races. Those Englishmen who know them well can differentiate between such jungle tribes, and will tell you that in reality few of them are exactly alike either in racial antecedents or personal idiosyncrasy; but the ordinary mortal who encounters such exotic aborigines for the first time may well be pardoned if he sees little or nothing to choose between them. Utter savages, wild men of the woods, trappers of game, herdsmen (who even domesticate bison!), and occasional head-hunters, they occupy themselves with poisoned-arrow warfare, personal vendettas that are decided by the domestic *dao*,[1] and the earnest study of every variety of demon propitiation and animism known to the Theosophical Society. Their almost impenetrable forests teem with big game—tiger, wild elephant, and buffalo abounding,—while, as a general rule, their rushing mountain rivers are well stocked with fish.

Many of them are foul feeders, and a whole family will camp under the lee of a trapped elephant until its stinking carcase has been completely consumed. . . . Races unpleasing in habit and custom, it still remains to be said in their favour that they are neither cannibals nor teetotalers. When raiding, these frontier races have not always in the past restricted their activities to intertribal warfare among themselves, and the lonely tea-planter living in remote districts has been the occasional object of their unwelcome attentions. Exciting stories of white women helping their husbands to defend their bungalows against the rushes of savage head-hunters recall Fenimore Cooper's novels of Red Indian and white settler life in

[1] A heavy knife.

America. To mention a few of the names of these prehistoric Bushmen — Chinns, Singphos, Nagas, Abors, Kukis, Daphlas, Mishmis, and Anka s—is probably to convey little or nothing to the English mind;[1] yet in the past they have not been altogether dissociated from our island story, and at rare intervals their names have cropped up in the English Press. When their names have appeared in print at all, it has generally been in connection with the murder of some British official. As in many other parts of our complex Empire, the proximity to civilisation of such barbarous backwoods necessitates the presence of some local levies to keep the peace. Even during a European War such military precautions still have to be taken, otherwise a whole countryside might be pillaged. In the case of the dark lands that we are now describing, a dozen battalions of military police are the wardens of the marches. In normal times native militias are trained and led by regular military officers, seconded from their regiments; and although in war-time most of these have now been released for service in Mesopotamia, they have been replaced by "crocks," who, even if no longer fit to support the strain of a prolonged campaign, are still quite capable of waging intermittent savage warfare. The duties of such men—and their confrères all the Empire over—are many and varied. Sometimes they sit for months in a lonely outpost, wishing that the destinies of the British Empire had not been cast in Asia or Africa; on other occasions they conduct punitive patrols against erring tribes, while more frequently they soothe by diplomacy shy or restless ones on the verge of tribal stampede. Little honour is theirs, and no glory at all, because hunting as they do in couples—or more often singly—there is nobody to chronicle their exploits. Their lot is fever, fatalism, and a very great loneliness, for in the wilds of Asia and Africa the white man dies swiftly, doctorless and alone, in the arms of some black but kindly savage. During Armageddon their task is not dissimilar from that of the Roman legionaries in ancient Britain, who, unrelieved in their weary vigil and cut off from civilisation, went on holding the Great Wall against the Picts and Scots at a moment in history when Rome herself, embarrassed by graver conflicts nearer home, could give but little thought to her distant provinces and far-flung outposts.

. . . . . .

"*Good* morning," said the subaltern, with offensive heartiness, "have you used Pears' Soap?"

---

[1] The tribesmen under discussion do not as a rule use these names among themselves. Such terms were coined by their Assamese or Bengali neighbours, and signify "naked men," "tattooed men," "jungle men," "eater of a thousand hearts" (*i.e.*, warriors), &c.

"No," replied his Captain, emerging from a lopsided bivouac tent, and struggling with an emotion that finally overcame his efforts to suppress it—"No, Peter, I . . . well, haven't: nor any other . . . soap either! I've just discovered that coming into camp last night, half my kit went down the *khud*[1] during that landslip. . . ." He ended his remarks with adjectives of appropriate calibre, and then proceeded to loot the subaltern's sponge-bag. Their ablutions completed, the two soldiers seated themselves on a waterproof sheet and watched the preparations that were being made for their early camp breakfast. These were being conducted by a dishevelled down-country bearer, assisted by a small *chokra* of evil mien and sinister aspect. In normal life the Captain belonged to the Royal Regiment of Artillery, and how or why he now found himself in command of a detachment of Gurkha Irregulars concerns no one but himself. He wore two African medal ribbons that were much faded and frayed at the edges, and a black patch over one eye recorded the work of the Turk in Gallipoli. Peter, his subaltern, was a restless fox-terrier-owning youth from the Sikh Brigade, whose only claim to immediate respectability lay in the possession of a pair of ragged khaki shorts. The rest of his shrinking person was inadequately concealed by his bath towel, and as this flapped wildly in the eddying breeze, an ugly purple scar was plainly visible above his left breast. He had acquired this souvenir at Tanga.

Beneath them the thickly wooded hillside fell abruptly out of sight; but had they cared to gaze straight ahead across the dizzy emptiness of cloud-filled valley just below, another huge mountain range would have rewarded their efforts. Neither, however, did gaze as we have suggested that they might have done, because both were sick to death of mountain scenery, and tinned Oxford sausages frizzling over the camp fire seemed to them at the moment to be far more worthy of meditative contemplation than all the sunrises of Central Asia put together. The morning dew was helioing them a thousand messages over the hills; the passionless kiss of the laughing young mountain wind fell carelessly upon the boldly offered petals of the flaunting wild orchids around them; the roar of the waterfall below them rose thunderingly in their ears; but Gallio-like they cared for none of these things, but simply cursed the cook.

"When in Allah's name will those sausages be ready, Alla Bux. . . . God strafe that *chokra;* what *will* he do next?"

"Hazri taiar hai" (breakfast is ready), at last announced the crouching abomination in muddy muslin, as it blew stertorously upon the damp and unhappy fire; "refrain from drinking the *Wister*

[1] *Khud* = hillside.

Sarse direct from the bottle-neck—for see it is broken." The soldiers ate hungrily, and then lighting their strong Burmese cheroots watched the noiseless Gurkha sentry at the edge of the forest upon his panther-like patrol. Save for the low *click, purr, squeak* of his sheathed kukri rubbing against his well-oiled leather belt, he made no sound at all, as barefooted he picked his way delicately through the dripping undergrowth. It was rather a pretty sight watching him, because in many ways the little Gurkha resembles the wary jungle creatures of his native land; and if out of his proper environment in a French cathedral city, he can give most of us a lead across a Himalayan glacier or through a Nepalese forest. The rest of the force—some two hundred rifles—lay huddled in a re-entrant down the hillside. Their grinning Mongolian faces, short sturdy build, Baden-Powell slouch hats, and bare knees, unhampered by the khaki shorts of their practical uniform, all combined to give an impression of Boy Scouts encamped for a picnic, rather than real live soldiers out upon the war-path.

"Tell you what it is," said the Captain, after a long silence, knocking a great grey ash off his cheroot, "I'm blowed if I know what we're supposed to be doing up here."

"How do you mean?" asked the subaltern.

"Well, we know that the Umptieth clan of the Chinn whatnots have been uppish on the Burma side of the frontier, and apparently Burma's asked us to co-operate from this direction. However, the discreet orders that have slowly filtered down to me from Simla, through the Politicals, seem to leave it in considerable doubt as to whether I'm to imitate the Welsh Mission, and convert the local heathen to Grace when I meet them, or contrariwise burn their villages, destroy their crops, and, generally speaking, rub their noses in the dirt."

"Explain," suggested the subaltern laconically, as boy-like he spat down the tempting void of the precipice, "remember I'm quite in the dark about our orders. Haven't had a sight of the footling things.' The captain fumbled in his mildewed haversack and produced an enormous screed of paper.

"Well, I'm not to act in an unnecessarily arbitrary manner," he quoted, "but rather to reason with the recalcitrant clansmen, and explain to them that——"

"Fancy reasonin' with a Chinn!" giggled the subaltern; "might as well reason with a missin' link!"

"To begin with," replied his senior severely, "we aren't dealing with the Chinns at all, *that's* Burma's show; and further, the races in general to which you so flippantly allude as being, well, somewhat backward in culture, are considered in Simla to represent an 'ethnological problem of absorbing interest.' *That* comes at the end of my orders."

"Rummy way of writin' orders," commented the subaltern professionally; "but here, of course, we're all blasted policemen,—— I forgot. Go on."

"If," continued the Captain, ignoring his junior's repeated interruptions, "the clans on our side do attempt to cross this watershed and join their confounded friends Burma way, how on earth am I to stop them without some shooting occurring? And if it comes to a scrap, I suppose some young civilian in Simla will say I'm a Hun, and the 'Bengalee'[1] will call me a Nero."

"Never mind if they do," comforted the subaltern; "life isn't long enough to listen to the quacking of every d——d fool, who thinks himself subtly superior—the world's stiff with them,—the great thing is to do one's job decently, hang the expense, and to blazes with the gallery boys' applause."

"Without realising it, Peter, you've had a brain-wave. If, since the days of Nelson, England has always expected every man to do his duty, she has also always expected him to disobey his formal orders, and take the consequences. If the results are happy, England takes the credit; if disastrous, the local man gets broke. It's a splendid game—from a Secretary of State's point of view."

"Talkin' of Nelson and sailors," said the subaltern rather irrelevantly, as he frantically attempted to free a bare brown and briar-scratched knee from the attentions of a cluster of hungry leeches, "I wish to goodness that I were a blue-and-gold-clad ashcat,[2] and lived in a civilised ward-room on service, instead of assing about these stinkin' jungles. Look at my knees—they are all bloody—and when the leeches aren't biting you the rest of the local fauna start gettin' to work. By the way, is that a dead root or a snake? . . . yes, *that* thing near your hand. . . ."

The Captain rose hastily, and proceeded to brain an excellent specimen of *cobra capello* that had been sunning itself neighbourly by his side. "Charming country in which to convalesce," he remarked, reseating himself; "and now, Peter, it's time we came to some decision about these downtrodden head-hunters. Where has the map got to? The contours are all wrong, by the way—probably sketched by some mad sapper. You might call up the *Dobhashis*[3] who were out last night, and we'll see how the land lies."

A long conference ensued between the British officers and their local advisers, and finally the Captain threw down the map with the air of one who has made up his mind. "Look here," he said to his subaltern, "from what these chaps tell us, there seems

[1] A native newspaper published in Calcutta. At birth it was spoon-fed on the dregs of British Radicalism.

[2] The old Army's nickname for a sailor.

[3] Lit., two-tongued—*i.e.*, interpreters, who in those hills frequently act as go-betweens or intelligence agents in addition to their ordinary duties.

no doubt whatever that the Umpty-first clan mean business, and intend crossing this range with the idea of chipping in with their pals on the other side. Already they're restless, and have raided villages near them, carrying off a score or so of their enemies' heads; and it appears that their war-drums were beating all yesterday afternoon. If they really do get started off on the war-path, it seems to me that the whole countryside will flare up and follow their example. Enthusiasm is infectious. That being the case, why not strafe them at once, and so put the fear of God into the rest before it's too late? It'll mean ignoring the political stunt of polite remonstrance, and somebody's going to be killed in the process; but in the long-run prompt and vigorous action applied at the psychological moment to the focus of unrest should justify itself. Because otherwise, if all the clans rise, it'll mean a pukha military expedition against them and any amount of bloodshed; *that* would be a pity, because there's no real vice in the Umpty-first, they only hunt heads same as we do racing Pots or other people C.I.E.'s."

"Quite so," agreed the subaltern, "and the sooner we start the better." They again conferred with their local guides as to ways and means, and finally decided to make a night march against the nearest rebel village, with a view to attacking it at dawn the next day. The afternoon was well advanced before all their various preparations were completed, and then they again forgathered for tea. "By the way," said the subaltern suddenly, "do you know it's only a fortnight to Christmas?"

"Really?" The Captain's tone lacked interest, and the subaltern flushed a little.

"I expect you'll think me an awful ass, but I take Christmas rather seriously, particularly in this God-forsaken country."

The Captain grunted. "I suppose you connect it with England," he said. "Plum-pudding and indigestion, mistletoe and flappers, forced amiability on the part of one's relations, and the local parson spouting unwarrantable optimism into the Family Pew!" The speaker smiled what was meant to be a cynical smile, but which in reality only succeeded in being rather a wry and twisted one. He had not been in England for over seven years: his liver was out of order, and further, his blood was poisoned by malaria. His best friend couldn't have called him an optimist.

The subaltern laughed. "Oh, there are other reasons as well," he replied cheerfully.

"Such as?"

"Well, for one thing — although, as you know, I ain't exactly pious — Christmas stands for rather a jolly sort of idea,—don't you think so?"

The Captain stared. "This is quite a new side to your character, Peter," he said; "and, to be candid, I don't mind betting that there's a woman in the case!"

The subaltern blushed guiltily.

"Well, yes," he confessed

confusedly. "You see, I'm engaged to be married, and I got an awf'lly rippin' sort of letter from my best girl last mail. Women put these sort of stunts rather decently, don't they? Sent me a Christmas card, too. Dashed artistic one. All robins an' bells an' frost . . ."

The Captain grunted again. "When's the ghastly tragedy to come off?" he inquired sympathetically.

"As soon as I've saved enough pay," replied the subaltern simply. "After I was sloshed in East Africa, I got them to send me up here on light duty. I was a bit dipped, you see, and you can't spend money on polo or racin' in these hills."

"True," assented his senior grimly, "you can't. And how long will it take you to square your debts?"

"Oh, about another six months, I suppose," replied the subaltern carelessly. "It seems an awful long time to wait, though, doesn't it?"

"Impatience," said the Captain oracularly, "is the curse of modern youth. As far as my rather hazy Biblical reminiscences go, I believe that there was once an esteemed patriarch who worked and waited seven whole years for the object of his affections."

"She must have been a bit long in the tooth by the time they did get to church," replied the subaltern ungallantly. "But I must bust off now and dish out that reserve ammunition."

. . . . . .

The Maze at Hampton Court is mere child's play compared with a twisty jungle-path in North-Eastern India; and, further, there are no snakes at Hampton Court. We said "path"; but to the European eye such jungle arteries are often indiscernible, for their course is only marked by a series of broken twigs amid bushes that are armpit high. As you stumble through the baffling thickets of a hillside that is often nearly perpendicular, the leading file who guides your faltering footsteps seems to take a malicious pleasure in bending back, and then suddenly releasing in your face every branch and bramble that is sufficiently elastic for his purpose. Even as upon night operations smoking is forbidden, so similarly on such occasions the solace of profanity is denied the soldier, and in consequence you must perforce grin and bear such indignities in silence. A *mithun*[1] or a *go'n'r*[2] snort indignantly from some dark lair close by, and you wonder whether it is going to charge; a tiger gives tongue in the farther distance; and finally a firefly settles on and sticks to your streaming forehead, investing you with a saintly halo to which you cannot remember possessing any immediate claim. When you are thoroughly sick of the whole business, some careless savage will suddenly discharge a lethal weapon at the flank of the

[1] Wild bison = *mithun.*

[2] Rhinoceros = *go'n'r.*

column, and a missile which —judging from its peculiar noise during flight—must be about the size of an orange, describes a parabola, and striking a coolie in the stomach winds him for at least ten minutes. Thus jungle-fighting begins all the world over, from the Amazon to the Brahmaputra. However, upon arrival before an enemy village itself more serious work may be expected, and indeed you often experience a very *mauvais quarte d'heure*. In the case of the Hill-Bushmen of the North-East Frontier of India their tactics vary very considerably, but of most it may be said that unless they are raiding for loot or vengeance, or are filling in their spare time by cutting up a convoy, they almost invariably adopt a defensive *rôle*. The actual methods which they employ again differ in detail; but stockades cunningly concealed in the forest, supported by the timely employment of *rockshoots*, form the backbone of their defence. A *rockshoot* is a rough-and-ready engineering stratagem, which is most effective in mountain warfare, and explained briefly it consists in toppling half a hillside—avalanche-wise—upon your unwary opponent below. Further, these tribes will dig hidden pits full of pointed and poisoned stakes, which if fallen into obviate the necessity of any more formal funeral. Fortunately for the white frontiersman in this part of the world, the denizens of these tracts are—unlike the Afridi marauder of the North-West Frontier — but poorly armed. Still in a type of flickering jungle warfare, where you seldom sense your enemy until you are within twenty yards of him, a smooth-bore musket that discharges a yard of looted telegraph wire, or a crossbow that releases an arrow tipped with deadly aconite, are weapons by no means to be despised.[1] It was about 4 A.M. — that uncomfortable hour before dawn—when Peter and his Captain debouched from a ragged apology for a pass and scrambled quietly across a raw rent in the hillside that had been torn open by a recent earthquake. Trees and shrubs lay uprooted in grotesque confusion, and while these offered obstacles to the column's progress, they were less formidable than the dense and clinging young bamboo higher up the hillside which had escaped the cataclysm. The tropical rain was pouring steadily in dark torrents. It fell in sheets rather than in drops. Having fallen, it rebounded from the earth and then leapt skywards again. The air was lashed by drenching spray and breathing became a conscious labour. The general effect in the forest was submarine in its nature: you almost expected to see fish darting through the trees in lieu of the stunned birds which fell from their drowned branches.

"Talk about the takin' of Lung-tung-pen," gasped the subaltern as he dashed the rain-water from his blinded eyes for

[1] Even a graze from a poisoned arrow may kill a healthy man more rapidly than the bite of a cobra.

the twentieth time that morning. "Swimming the Irrawaddy must have been positively dry work compared with messing about the bottom of *this* damned aquarium. We shall probably meet a mermaid in a minute. Hullo! . . ."

The rain ceased suddenly, and with the rising sun the steaming jungle turned into a purgatory of the vapour-bath variety. A slight crackle in the undergrowth just ahead and their native guide sank upon one knee. He then made a low warning noise like the spit of an angry snake. So natural was his reproduction of this *p'his't* that Peter instinctively shrank backwards, and in doing so his light deerskin boot dislodged a stone. Gathering impetus, and snowball-like attracting to itself other similar debris, it fell bounding down the *khud*-side, the noise which followed sounding prodigious midst the awesome quiet of the lonely mountains. The old Gurkha *subadar* just had time to throw his subaltern a reproachful glance and then things began to happen. To quote Mr Kipling, "a snider squibbed in the jungle" —many sniders, in fact. Also a score of bows twanged rudely from nowhere in particular, and a feathery shower of poisoned arrows rustled through the leaves.

"Down, men!" shouted their leader, "and don't all crowd together like a bunch of bally bananas! Now then, section volleys to your front, and clear the jungle. None of your independent firing there, Peter, or the men 'll blaze away all their ammunition in less than no time. . . . We're scallywags, remember. *That's* right . . . do it again." A fairly respectable volley crashed out three times, but the enemy stood their ground and returned the fire. A rock in front of the subaltern was thrice monotonously chipped by heavy grey splashes of lead. "Shootin' not too dusty," he observed quietly; "this is going to be war, not punishment!" Indeed the enemy's primitive weapons were taking effect at this close quarter ding-dong forest fighting, and under such local conditions the police's superiority in armament became more a theoretical than a practical quantity. Further, they were heavily outnumbered and could see little or nothing of their hidden enemy. A Gurkha on the subaltern's right fell forward without a cry. A small blue-pencilled mark showed up vividly against the brown of his forehead, but the back of his head—or rather its absence —was mercifully hidden from view. Another rifleman rose to obtain a better aim at some elusive target in the bushes forty yards away, but before the rifle reached his shoulder he collapsed again and stoically drew an arrow from his thigh. He, too, presently moved no more.

"Every time a cocoanut!" muttered the subaltern, reloading his sporting *Mannlicher*. "What price *that* Aunt Sally?" and he fired as he spoke at a bedizened savage who wore a barbaric head-dress ornamented with wild-boar's tushes. His aim was true, and the Bushman fell clattering among his

own weapons — spear, shield, and tower musket.

"We'd better get round their flank," yelled the Captain above the din; "they've got the bulge over us, behind that blasted stockade, and the ground in front of it's all full of poisoned man-traps!" He blew his whistle as he spoke and led his men up the hillside. Here the jungle grew thinner and a patch of open *jhum*[1] afforded them a brief tactical breathing space. A portion of the village now revealed its insanitary existence, and rows of human heads intermingled with animal masks grinned hideously from the walls. From the courtyards within rose the unceasing bray of the war-drum, while a crowd of excited tribesmen outside were dancing the national war-dance. Tossing their arms upwards they advanced with shrill blood-curdling cries, stamping upon the ground with rhythmical precision, and shouted occasional defiance at the handful of Gurkhas. The distance between the opposing forces had now widened—as a result of the flanking movement—to about two hundred yards. As the jungle all round the British force was rustling with unseen enemies, the Captain decided that a bold bayonet charge upon the village itself was the best way of clearing up the immediate situation. The Military Police dashed forward. One section got into difficulties, and were held up by a sort of elephant-trap, full of sharpened bamboos, which might or might not have been poisoned, but the remainder went through the enemy as though they had been brown paper, and cleared the village in one irresistible rush. Then the Gurkhas drew their *kukris* and chased the fleeing tribesmen into the jungle beyond. But here—behind the village — the enemy had reserved his tactical *pièce de résistance*. As the little Gurkhas panted up the steep hillside, like eager terriers after evicted rats, a long low rumble was heard, that grew in sullen intensity every second. "Look out!" shouted the subaltern warningly; "here comes a rockshoot!" He was well out of its direct course himself, but on turning to warn his men saw a wounded bugler lying full in the path of the coming avalanche. He tore back to drag him out of danger, but was just too late, and a moment afterwards a whole landslip of rocks, earth, and trees swept down with the roar of an express train. The full force of the "shoot" missed the two men, but they did not escape its violence altogether, and officer and bugler were flung fifty yards down the hillside, and half buried under the heavy debris. A stray Bushman, *dao* in hand, rushed forward to secure the unconscious white boy's head, but a Gurkha shot him in the back before he reached his intended victim. The temporary confusion among the British force that the discharge of the rockshoot created had been anticipated by the enemy, and

[1] *Jhum* = sporadic cultivation in the middle of the forest.

they seized the psychological moment to counter-attack. Then, as the Captain said later, "some dirty work occurred in the offing." The Bushmen, who were in force, fought stubbornly but wildly; the outnumbered Gurkhas equally stubbornly and with disciplined co-operation. For five minutes it was any one's victory, but then the *kukri* prevailing over the *dao*, the enemy were *chopped* back—that is the only description — into their native jungle again. Both *dao* and *kukri* are weapons which are suitable for cutting up bison carcasses, and the results, when they are used upon humanity, are not at all pretty. Despite the comparatively light casualties on both sides, the small clearing behind the village was a bloody shambles, where fantastically-clad barbarian and more soberly-equipped Gurkha lay in inextricable death-grips, still worrying each other's wounds. It was indeed war as the cinema depicts it: crude, personal, and gory. The police, only pausing to retrieve their dead and wounded, set fire to the now deserted village, and then climbed to a higher spur in the mountains. Here a position was occupied where a more extensive field of fire was obtainable, and where, in consequence, the patrol was less liable to surprise. With the rest of the wounded, the still unconscious subaltern was jerked and pushed up the steep ascent by a dozen rough though willing hands. Perhaps it was as well that he did remain unconscious, for twice the men who bore him slipped and fell, and once they dropped him altogether. His left leg had sustained a compound fracture below the knee, while a sharp stake had laid bare the torn muscles of his calf. Allowing for the despatch of a messenger to civilisation, and for the return journey, there was no prospect of obtaining a doctor within a month. On the Wall, however, such *contretemps* are not uncommon.

"You might as well try your hand at it," said the subaltern a fortnight later, "because as things are at present my number's up all right, so what's the odds if you do make a mess of it?"

It was Christmas Eve, and he lay shivering on a bed of sodden bracken, wrapped in the Captain's clammy mackintosh. From time to time he was shaken from head to foot by those great shuddering rigors that so often accompany acute blood-poisoning. The ceaseless rain, its direct force broken by the roof of the leaky *basha*[1] which sheltered him, alternately dripped upon or sprayed across his flushed and upturned face. Under the stress of fever, pain, and hardship, he looked exactly what he was—namely, a tired child, who had been systematically overworked for nearly three years. His broken leg lay strapped to a rough

[1] *Basha* = a primitive and temporary native shelter, hastily constructed with branches and grass.

splint. In addition to being broken, sepsis had set in, and the injured limb had now become discoloured and fearfully swollen. The Captain had done what he could, but hitherto his surgery had not been conspicuous for its success, and to-day it was plain both to surgeon and patient alike that a crisis was at hand.

The Captain was kneeling by the subaltern's apology for a bed, vainly attempting to shelter him from the teasing rain-trickle off the roof, while he supported a large calf-bound volume, the contents of which both of them were earnestly perusing. It was entitled 'Medicine for the Masses,' and upon its flyleaf was written in beautifully fine and clear handwriting—"To dearest George, from Aunt Matilda." "Dearest George" was the Captain. There were two or three other works of equal scientific value lying scattered upon the grass. "You see," said the Captain hopefully, "if the skipper of a tramp steamer could do the trick all right, why shouldn't I be able to? According to the book he hadn't half the outfit that's in our medical wallet; and *we've* got chloroform, which is more than *he* had." The passage alluded to in 'Medicine for the Masses' had reference to what laymen could attempt during emergencies, a case being cited of a captain of a collier saving a seaman's life by amputating his hand in mid-ocean. The two frontiersmen, with the simple optimism of those who have long been accustomed to expect nothing except what their own efforts can accomplish, were seriously discussing the practicability of an amateur amputation in the jungle which might yet save the subaltern's life. The only alternative to so drastic a measure seemed certain death from septic poisoning, and in this connection the subaltern had remarked briefly that he would prefer a run for his money. The Captain had a very extensive and practical knowledge of veterinary science, which he trusted might stand him in good stead, one of the Gurkha sepoys had formerly been trained as a hospital orderly, and finally there was the invaluable medical wallet which contained an assorted jumble of instruments and antiseptics. "The great thing," said the Captain, "is to locate those anterior and posterior tibial arteries. Once they've had ligatures properly applied—and I've often tied ligatures in the horse hospital —there's no real danger of excessive hemorrhage."

"No," replied the subaltern, "and after that I suppose it's more or less a matter of carpentry and keeping things clean." He smiled feebly. "I wonder why we ever employ doctors at all!" he added.

"I've got plenty of nerve for the job," continued the Captain, trying to throw some enthusiasm into his tone. "When I was a kid I was an awful knut at stuffing birds and skinning rabbits, and of course all that sort of thing helps."

"Of course," replied the subaltern; "and Alla Bux

could give me the chloroform." As an anæsthetist the weeping cook might not perhaps have inspired a London surgeon with undue confidence, but snivelling into his unravelled blue puggri he promised faithfully to do his best. "The bettin' ain't exactly in my favour," admitted the subaltern, his voice faltering a little for the first time. "Still, with my leg like an inflated zeppelin, it's obviously my last ruddy chance, so for God's sake get a move on George, before I start funkin' it." He was seized with another terrible shivering fit as he spoke, and buried his burning face in the dripping bracken. The Captain turned away, and diving silently into the medical wallet, slowly selected such surgical instruments as it contained. His expression, as he did so, wasn't a pretty one, because he was mutinously blaspheming all the gods in which he didn't believe for their apparent indifferences to human fate.

"It's a thousand to one, of course, against my making any sort of job of this," he muttered; "only a dashed miracle could save him now, and I don't happen to believe in miracle stunts—not even on Christmas Eve! Still, if the worst comes to the worst," he concluded grimly, "he'd much better hop off the twig under chloroform than wait for sepsis to do the trick. Nasty sticky end sepsis . . . and it's giving him h—ll already." He compared the surgical instruments with a card of corresponding numbered diagrams, and sorting the rusty cutlery, proceeded to boil it.

"I say," said the subaltern, with a fine assumption of carelessness, "by the way, if you don't mind, I think I'll give you my people's address before you begin."

"Quite so," replied the Captain dryly.

"Also, you might just chuck me my *fiancée's* photograph, will you? It's over there in my haversack . . . yes, on the top of that case of tinned salmon."

The Captain complied with his request, and then resumed his immediate task. When all was ready he unostentatiously mixed himself a stiff peg, summoned the ex-hospital orderly, and approached the subaltern with what he trusted was a happy bedside manner. No further conversation ensued between them, but both surgeon and patient shook hands in silence. At that moment, however, an interruption occurred. There was some slight disturbance outside the bivouac. In the distance some Gurkhas sprang to attention. A few seconds later a bedraggled figure, mounted on a small and undignified hill pony, splashed upon the scene. It streamed with water from its pulp-like pith helmet to its sodden polo boots. The rider drew nearer, and gave a view-halloo!

"That you, Blackwall!" he shouted—"Merry Christmas! I say, your patrol looks pretty

damaged. Been bearin' the White Man's Burden lately? Just on my way to Fort Té-häng on special duty. They're all down with cholera, d——n 'em! Believe they've done it on purpose just to do me out of my leave. Personally, I want some quinine and brandy badly. 'Specially brandy. My kit won't be in till dark. Hullo! is that Peter? What's up?"

The Captain laughed a little unsteadily as he shook the newcomer by the hand. "I'm dashed if a miracle stunt hasn't come off after all!" he remarked rather incoherently, more to himself than to the man whom he now recognised as the local civil surgeon.

"What do you mean?"

The Captain explained.

"Good Lord!" cried the cheery little medico, "an' so you were really just going to . . . Good *Lord!* . . . Deuced lucky I happened to come this way; it was absolute chance — as you say, a miracle!" He paused, his professional eye arrested by the Captain's astonishing medical library. "'Medicine for the Masses,'" he read out slowly, "'Every one his own surgeon,' 'What a young girl oughtn't to know,' 'How I ridded myself of superfluous fat in a fortnight.' . . . *Good* Lord! What next, I wonder! Here, let's have a look at him," and he bent over the subaltern's leg. "Amputation," he snapped—"amputation be jiggered; I know a thing or two better than that. But what a light-hearted butcher you must be, Blackwall, to want to dissect your own subaltern!"

The Captain attempted some inadequate excuses, which were swept aside by the outraged follower of Æsculapius. "*I'll* 'medicine for the mass' you, next time you get fever," he threatened darkly, and then his eye fell upon the photograph of the subaltern's *fiancée*. "Death-bed scenes?" he inquired suspiciously. "Not yet awhile, my son! No, not by a very long chalk; but if I know anything about my job, that leg of yours means a whole year's poodle-fakin' in Blighty. Here, you black *thug*"—this to the unfortunate Alla Bux—"just you hand over that chloroform, and stand by to lend me a hand. Wo'ah, mare! . . . So ho! steady there, Peter! . . . suck it down like a man . . . gently does it . . . *that's* right. . . . He's going off beautifully. Here, Blackwall, hand me those tin-openers of yours, and if I were you, I shouldn't look this way for the next half-hour. Hang it, man, you're as white as a ghost already . . . yes *you*, you blanked—er—body-snatcher!"

But for once the Captain had no apt retort ready. He had lit a cigarette, and was staring absent-mindedly into the mist-blurred sunset. Perhaps the foundations of his usual scepticism had just received rather a severe shock. This often happens to men On the Wall.

HAZLITT *v.* 'BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE.'

AN ANCIENT CONTROVERSY.

AN unpublished article has just come into my hands, written just a hundred years ago by William Hazlitt. It is a reply, composed with all the energy of heat, to a letter which appeared in 'Blackwood's Magazine' for August 1818, and which was entitled "Hazlitt Cross-Questioned." The signature set at the end of that letter, "An Old Friend with a New Face," gives no clue to its authorship. But it may, with some assurance, be ascribed to John Wilson, whose sympathy with the Lake School is well known. That Hazlitt got the better of the argument is certain. Though the "Old Friend with the New Face" may claim some scores to his credit, his dislike of Hazlitt betrayed him to a reckless insolence, which Hazlitt had no difficulty in countering. For the rest, it may be said that the most of old controversies keep their freshness no longer than Parliamentary debates or the novels of a season. But this one controversy, which raged for many years between 'Blackwood's Magazine' and the Cockney School, has been revived again and again, and it is but fitting that in the same columns in which the attack was made, some account, belated though it be, should be given of Hazlitt's defence.

I.

In the early numbers of 'Blackwood's Magazine' Hazlitt received nothing but praise. His lectures on the English Poets were reported therein by Mr Patmore with approval and admiration. Four months before "The Old Friend with a New Face" wielded his bludgeon, it had been frankly stated by Mr Patmore in the same Magazine "that when Mr Hazlitt's taste and judgment are left to themselves, we think him among the best, if not the very best, living critic on our national literature." Two months later Jeffrey and Hazlitt were gravely contrasted and united in a common panegyric. It is true, they were warned that "their compositions would be like those figures drawn upon the sand by the early mathematicians—figures from which their pupils learned much, but which were washed away by the return of the tide." At the same time the wreaths of "excellence" and "originality" were bound about their heads. And this discerning tribute was paid to Hazlitt: "Persons who are unable to follow the substratum of strong sense in Mr Hazlitt's discourses, are at least able to watch the clink of his epigrammatical humour." In the meantime the attacks upon the Cockney School had been made by Lockhart. The scorpion was delighting to

sting the faces of men. He had held Hunt, who was Hazlitt's ally,—whom Hazlitt, after his wont, was free to attack himself, and yet protected from the attacks of others,—up to public shame and ridicule. Thus the literary battle was engaged, and was fought out by both sides, upon the false field of politics. Henceforth nothing that Hazlitt could do or say was right, while Blackwood and his contributors seemed to Hazlitt clothed always in the garb of sycophants and time-servers. Even Scott himself was grossly libelled for his loyal friendships, and the combatants were well content if only the blows of their cudgels, ill-directed as they were, resounded smartly upon the heads of their adversaries.

II.

So Hazlitt, the "excellent and original" critic of June, became in July an "unprincipled blunderer," and in August was submitted to a brisk cross-questioning. He went willingly into the box, and fiercely turned the tables on his examiner. If only the full reply had been printed in 'Constable's Edinburgh Magazine,' for which no doubt it was intended, the answer from the other side would have been worth reading. For if neither yielded to his foe in discourtesy, they were both "bonny fighters." That Hazlitt was angry is clear from the exordium of his letter, which, says he, the reader may skip over. "Before I answer your questions," he writes, "give me leave to tell you my opinion of the person who asks them. I think then you are a person of little understanding, with great impudence, a total want of principle, an utter disregard to truth or even the character of common veracity, and a very strong ambition to be picked up and paid as a cat's paw. If I were in the habit of using the words Liar, Fool, Coxcomb, Hypocrite, Scoundrel, Blackguard, &c., I should apply them to you, but this would be degrading them still lower unnecessarily, for it is quite as easy to prove you the *things* as to call you the names." Thus the battle begins, and as I turn over Hazlitt's admirable manuscript, and note the bold, determined handwriting, I know that he is well set to the encounter, and will not easily give ground or quarter.

With a full acknowledgment of the truth of his adversary's statement that he is a writer of third-rate books —"you state my pretensions quite as high or higher than I should"—with a familiar hit at Mr Coleridge, and a sneer at Mr Wordsworth and Lord Lonsdale, he denies that he lounges in any booksellers' shops, third or first-rate. "I sometimes, indeed," says he, "lounge away my time in the Fives' Court"—that he has made immortal—"and play rackets instead of answering your questions. But your not knowing me enables you

to say what you please of me." And so at last he faces his opponent resolutely from the witness-box, discussing Wordsworth with him, and pouring contempt upon the poet, after his custom. "The Old Friend with a New Face" had asked him: "Did you or did you not, in the course of your late Lectures on Poetry, infamously vituperate and sneer at the character of Mr Wordsworth—I mean his personal character; his genius even you dare not deny?" Sharply came Hazlitt's reply: "Why not: because I dare not deny my own convictions: certainly I am bound by public opinion to acknowledge in very unsparing terms, and I have in fact gone on the forlorn hope in praising him." The hope was not so grimly forlorn as Hazlitt thought. "As to his personal character," thus he goes on, "I have said nothing about it. I have spoken of his intellectual egotism (truly and warrantably) as the bane of his talents and of his public principles. It is because you cannot answer what I have said on the Lake School of Poetry that you ask me eight impertinent questions."

Hazlitt's reply, it must be admitted, is not conclusive. It is true that he declares at the outset that "Mr Wordsworth is the most original poet now living," but he then proceeds fiercely to castigate him. He prints the familiar tirade which his intellectual frugality persuaded him to use again in his 'Political Essays,' and which assuredly touches not only Wordsworth's poetry but Wordsworth's character. "He tolerates only what he himself creates," thus he writes: "he sympathises only with what can enter into no competition with him, with 'the bare trees and mountains bare, and grass in the green fields.' He sees nothing but himself and the universe. He hates all greatness and all pretensions to it, whether well or ill-founded. . . . He hates all science and all art; he hates chemistry; he hates conchology; he hates Voltaire; he hates Sir Isaac Newton; he hates wisdom; he hates wit." And so covering the whole field of human endeavour with inexhaustible energy, Hazlitt enumerates the hatreds of Wordsworth, and then declares that he has said nothing about Wordsworth's private character! It is a position which he cannot sustain. Such vanity and egoism as he ascribes to Wordsworth are personal and not artistic vices, and here, I think, his opponent is justified of his charge. By a whimsical paradox, Hazlitt, a Jacobin in politics, was a violent anti-Jacobin in literature. He clung closely to the older tradition, and much as he disliked Wordsworth's Tory politics, he disliked still more what he considered the Radical tendencies of his poems. He did not believe that all things are equally fit subjects for poetry. He belaboured the Lake Poets because "they founded the new school on a principle of sheer humanity, or pure nature void of art." He saw them "surrounded, in company with the Muses, by a mixed rabble of idle apprentices and Botany

Bay convicts, female vagrants, gipsies, meek daughters in the family of Christ, of idiot boys and mad mothers, and after them 'owls and night-ravens flew.'" It is pretty invective, but it does not absolve Hazlitt from the charge, nor prove that in applauding Wordsworth's genius he left his character unassailed.

The second question Hazlitt was asked to answer was easily disposed of. "Is it or is it not true," says the cross-examiner, "that you owe all your ideas about poetry or criticism to gross misconceptions of the meaning of his conversation?" This gave Hazlitt precisely the opening which he loved: "I do swear, No, for this reason that I never got any ideas at all from him, for this reason, that he had none to give. All I remember of his conversation turned upon extreme instances of self-will and self-adulation, as the following, which are given *verbatim:* 'That he would hang up the whole of the House of Commons. That he wished Tierney had shot out Mr Pitt's tongue, to put an end to his gift of the gab. That he saw nothing in Lord Chatham's and Lord Mansfield's speeches to admire, and what did it end in, but their being made Lords. That Sir Isaac Newton was a man of a little mind, if we could believe the stories that Coleridge told about him. That as to poetry, there was something in Shakespeare that he could not make up his mind to, for he hated those interlocutions between Lucius and Caius: and as to Milton, the only great merit of the "Paradise Lost" was in the conception or in getting rid of the horns and tail of the Devil, for as to the execution he thought he could do as well or better himself. There is nothing like this in my lectures. There is only one passage which I can charge myself as having taken from his conversation, and I leave it to his adversaries to find it out. . . . Mr Wordsworth's power is not that of analysis or illustration. His head always puts me in mind of Dean Swift's reprimand to his servant, who was trying in vain to break a coal in pieces with a poker—"That's a stone, you blockhead!"'"

We may take it, then, that Hazlitt was perfectly right when he asserted that he had learned nothing of poetry from Mr Wordsworth. Indeed, he had not. He looked upon books with other eyes than Mr Wordsworth's, and from another coign of vantage. The stream of his judgment ran broader if not deeper than the stream of the poet's. And yet we may justly ask ourselves whether he was right to resent the fierce, insolent criticism of others, when he permitted himself to take the last freedom with Mr Wordsworth's reputation. At any rate, his ill-temper was not assuaged when his cross-examiner charged him with ingratitude towards the poet, to whose influence, it was alleged, Hazlitt owed his personal safety, even his existence. In reply to this charge he repeats a story which, says he, Mr Wilson tells in all companies—how an article in 'The

Examiner,' in praise of "The Excursion," was read to the seer by Mr Wilson himself. "'Ha,' said Mr Wordsworth, somewhat appeased, 'there's some sense in this fellow, too: the Dog writes strong. . . . Very well written indeed, sir, I did not expect a thing of this kind,' and strutting up and down the room in high good humour" — there is an inaccuracy here: I am sure Mr Wordsworth never strutted— "kept every now and then wondering who could be the author, he had no idea and should like very much to know to whom he was indebted for such pointed and judicious praise." When Wilson told him that it was Hazlitt's, "our poor philosopher was thrown into a greater rage than ever, and a fit of outrageous incredulity, to think that he should be indebted for the first favourable account that had ever appeared of any work that he had ever written to a person on whom he had conferred such great and unmerited obligations." And if the story be true, nobody would ever dispute the justice of Hazlitt's conclusion: "I think this statement will show that there is little love lost between me and my benefactor."

When his cross-examiner goes on to say that Hazlitt has been "deservedly expelled from 'The Edinburgh Review,'" his retort is apt and ready. "I leave Mr Jeffrey to answer that question, and I also inclose some letters from him to me on the subject of communications for that work, written just before and since the publication of the seventeenth number of 'Blackwood's Magazine.' This imputation alone, which I affirm to be false at the time it was made, but which was meant as a prediction to fulfil itself, strikes at my reputation as an author and my livelihood in the most direct and deliberate way. As to the anxiety of the writer to have me turned out of the E. R. as a disgrace and injury to that work, it is not easy to reconcile this with his denunciation of that publication as a *dying work*, and his wish to see it dead. It seems that he hates the E. R. much, but he hates me more." Such was one of the charges which Hazlitt regarded as actionable, and plainly the "Old Friend with the New Face" could not have it both ways.

III.

From general charges Hazlitt's assailant descended to particular accusations. "Do you not call Mr Canning," he demands with shaking forefinger—"one flash of whose eye, one word of whose lip, would wither you into annihilation— the most contemptible character of the day?" Such a question, of course, left Hazlitt unperturbed. He liked nothing better than to ridicule Mr Canning, and would welcome any charge more gladly than the charge that he had applauded the Anti-Jacobin. "I am not aware," said he, "that Mr Canning's *fade* oratory would wither me into annihila-

tion any more than the sickly smell of a perfumer's shop would wither me into annihilation; but if I have called him the most contemptible character of the day, I grant I have gone too far. It is indeed a bold word to say."

As the dispute continues, the interlocutors, so to say, raise their voices, and shout insults at one another. Hazlitt is denounced for an "impudent charlatan," "a hard-hearted Cockney"; the malignity of ignorance and the drunkenness of folly are imputed to him; he is asked if he knows the Latin for a goose. And he retorts upon his attacker with all the contempt he can muster. "You say," he writes, "that I, who do not know the number of letters in the Greek alphabet, pretend to give an opinion on Mr Porson's literary character. And I say, you lie. I take the common opinion of his classical attainments for granted, but I have said that he was also a man of wit and sense, which I might be a judge of without knowing the letters of the Greek alphabet, which I do know." And again: "You say that I at all times and in all places describe the editors of 'The Scots Magazine' as ninnies and their works as a mill-stone, and I say that you tell the falsehood to do me an injury." So the fight goes on, until Hazlitt arrives at his peroration, in which he resents, very properly, that the epithet "pimpled" should be applied to him. Happily, by our code of to-day, such personal assaults as this are impossible, and perhaps even Hazlitt, living in a rougher time, would have done better to ignore it. But it rankled, as the insult thrown at his Tishy by Jonathan Wild rankled in that lady's chaste mind, and he cannot but ask in Tishy's own accent, "why pimpled, Mr Blackwood, why pimpled?"

"Finally, sir, you call me as a nickname pimpled Hazlitt" —thus the article comes to an end. "And I am not pimpled, but remarkably pale and sallow. You were told of this as a false fact, and you repeated it and still repeat it, declaring to hundreds of persons individually and to the public that you not only do not care for the distinction between truth and falsehood, but that you are superior to being thought to care about it. When Mr Patmore simply stated at the end of his account of my Lectures that you were in a mistake in applying the epithet 'pimpled' to me, you replied that 'I had lately got into a passion with a humble squire who had spied a pimple on my nose'—insinuating with admirable dexterity three falsehoods in one sentence. 1. That it was I who had given the account of my own Lectures. 2. That the person who contradicted your account was in a furious passion. 3. That the humble squire had actually spied a pimple on my nose.

"You say, lastly, in another place (you or one of the set) that I have no opinion of my own, but by contradicting all established and generally received opinion. And you bring as a

proof of this that on the subject of Shakespeare's Poems I differ with Mr Wordsworth, who in the very passage you refer to reprobates all preceding English critics for being of my mind on this point. So that I am here completely with the vulgar. You also, with a candour and a consistency worthy of your temper and understanding, adduce this solitary exception, in an entire volume on Shakespear, to the most unqualified and (what has been objected to as) extravagant praise to shew the absurdity and bad faith of the Edinburgh Reviewers in giving me credit for being an enthusiastic and judicious admirer of Shakespear.

"I had forgot to say that in another part of the same publication (see Review of Mr Lamb's works) you talk of 'the open blasphemy, or which is as bad, hypocritical piety of such reckless unbelievers as Hunt and Hazlitt.' I have never written a word of either open blasphemy or hypocritical piety. Is it answered?" I think it is answered fairly and squarely.

IV.

This voice of Hazlitt's is as a voice from the grave. Yet it is alive with all the dialectic anger of the day. And the anger of that day was purely dialectic. The discourtesy and falsehood, which on either side seemed to embitter the critical controversies of a hundred years ago, were faults of manners rather than of morals. The scope and purpose of the battle were perfectly well understood by all the combatants. To pour ridicule upon an opponent, who held distasteful opinions or had knitted friendships with the enemy, appeared to our grandfathers the first duty of man. In violent attack, in the determination to give a political colour to criticism, Hazlitt and Lockhart are at one. Vituperation gave them an excellent chance to show their skill in onset and defence. They were artists in the sport of intellectual single-stick, and they were quick to take advantage of any opening that their adversary might give them. If we would find their parallel, we must go back to the "flytings," the spirit and manner of which they reproduce after their own fashion. When Montgomerie and Sir Patrick Hume of Polwarth fell furiously upon one another, the one spared nothing in invective which might confound the argument or injure the vanity of the other. And they prided themselves on their good temper! "No cankering envy," wrote Montgomerie—

"No cankering envy, malice or despite,
Stirr'd up these men so eagerly to flyte,
But generous emulation."

The boast sounds a little strained to modern ears, but Hazlitt and Christopher North might have echoed it with equal justice.

What the Scots knew as "flyting" was turned to prose, also a favourite controversial weapon of our Elizabethans.

When Thomas Nashe fell upon Gabriel Harvey, he employed all the resources which eloquence and scholarship gave him. He set his victim in every posture suggested by ridicule and contempt. He sketched his career in the grimmest colours, and achieved such a caricature of a man as scorn might suggest and hatred execute. And Gabriel Harvey lagged not behind in insolence; he barbed his shaft with as dire a venom. But who cared what it was all about? The small world of letters watched the display with a critical eye, and gave its praise or blame not to the justice of the cause but to its bitterness or humorous presentation, until at last the dispute seemed tiresome and profitless, and then Whitgift and Bancroft issued their solemn order "that all Nasshes bookes and Doctor Harvyes bookes be taken wheresoever they maye be found, and that none of theire bookes bee ever printed hereafter."

The conflict, then, which raged in the early nineteenth century between 'Blackwood's Magazine' and the Cockney School, is best illustrated by such encounters as Montgomerie's with Hume or Nashe's with Harvey. Unfortunately sentiment and partisanship have pretended that Mr Blackwood's friends were alone blameworthy, that Lockhart and Wilson, out of the wickedness of their hearts, made wanton and boisterous attacks upon all that was seemly and of good repute. In other words, the Whig dogs have once more had their way. They have perverted literary history as they perverted political history to their purpose. They set the story going that Keats died of a review. "Poor Keats! what was sport to the town was death to him." Thus Hazlitt, who, let it be remembered, used Keats chiefly as a stick to beat his critics with, and who found no place for him in his Lectures among living poets. But Keats was far too wise and too strong a man to be "snuffed out" by a hundred articles, and he owed little enough to the interested championship of his friends.

Moreover, it was not the riotous critics of 'Blackwood's Magazine' who set the fashion of controversial abuse. They adopted the fashion from their opponents and in self-defence. They were determined not to leave all the advantages to the other side. When the Magazine was some five years old, and had been assailed with all the volubility of Radical rhetoricians, the Editor explained—he did not apologise for—his policy in a preface. "The simple truth of the affair lies in a nutshell," says he. "For a series of years the Whigs in Scotland had all the jokes to themselves. They laughed and lashed as they liked: and while this was the case, did anybody ever hear them say that either laughing or lashing was among the seven deadly sins?" Assuredly nobody did, and it is one of the puzzles of history that the partiality and injustice of the Whigs has been handed down to our age as a body of incontrovertible gospel.

Now Hazlitt loved the fray for the fray's sake as much as

any man. The author of "A Letter to William Gifford, Esq.," knew well that the flame of invective burned within, and he was not one to hide his light under a bushel. If his politics were all in the future, his criticism was all in the past, and he thought that nobody who did not agree with his platitudes about liberty and reform was capable of a good verse or a good action. Even if his friends were poets he could see little merit in them. Shelley, says he, "has a maggot in his brain, a hectic stutter in his speech, which mark out the philosophic fanatic." He is "chargeable with extreme levity," and Hazlitt wishes that "he would put a stop to the incessant, alarming whirl of his voltaic battery." And what of Keats? The fault of his poems is "effeminacy." Hazlitt hints that they should be classed with the productions of the Della Cruscan school, the "calm peaceable writers," in Dryden's phrase, whose "works should be printed, as they generally are, on hot-pressed paper, with vignette margins." As to Wordsworth and Coleridge, he seemed to think that he had an exclusive right to laugh at these austere prophets, who had once been his friends, and he could find no worthier compeer for Southey than Sir Richard Blackmore! He can forget that Byron is a lord no more easily than that Sir Walter Scott is "an aristocrat in principle." In praising their works he forbears not to insult them both. The fact is, after the rapture of his first meeting with them, he disliked all living poets. "I cannot say that I ever learnt much about Shakespeare or Milton from these professed guides, for I never heard them say much about them"—thus he writes. "They were always talking of themselves and one another." When some one said that he would like to see Shakespeare, for his part, he wrote, he would give a good deal not to see him; "at least, if he was at all like anybody else that I have ever seen."

Though Hazlitt would not permit others unavenged to treat harshly the poets, whom he castigated himself, though he resented, rhetorically, any attack upon himself, he was a man of humour after all, and he must perforce have admitted that in the war of wits both sides might claim the right of abuse. And he himself outstripped in violence and in injustice all the men of 'Blackwood's' and 'The Quarterly.' In the works of no other writer shall you find so large a body of invective. He spared nobody who was in disagreement with him, and few who were in his own camp. His admiration of the Waverley Novels was not far on this side idolatry; and yet he insulted Scott with a poisonous venom, which neither Lockhart nor Wilson would have used against any man. Here are a few of the shameful things which Hazlitt wrote, falsely, about the good Sir Walter, of whose character he knew nothing: "Raised by affluence, the reward of successful industry, and by the voice of fame above

the want of any but the most honourable patronage, he stooped to the unworthy acts of adulation, and abetted the views of the great with the pettifogging feelings of the meanest dependant on office"; and again: "he strewed the slime of rankling malice and mercenary scorn over the bud and promise of genius, because it was not fostered in the hot-bed of corruption, or warped by the trammels of servility"; and worse still: "he joined a gang of desperadoes to spread calumny, contempt, infamy, wherever they were merited by honesty or talent on a different side—he officiously undertook to decide public questions by private insinuations, to prop the throne by nicknames, and the altar by lies — being (by common consent) the finest, the most humane and accomplished writer of his age, he associated himself with and encouraged the lowest panders of a venal press; deluging and nauseating the public mind with the offal and garbage of Billingsgate abuse and vulgar slang." What is all this nonsense? Is it mere "flyting"? Or did Hazlitt believe a word of it when he wrote it? I do not think that he believed a word of it. It is merely a noisy and elaborate method of expressing a Whiggish prejudice. It is a showy vengeance upon that sad word "pimpled." Yet proud as Hazlitt is of his satirical power, his satire misses its effect, because it is sent to the wrong address. And, with a full knowledge (or guilty ignorance) of Hazlitt's excesses in this kind, the Whigs have ever since held up their hands in pious horror at the exaggerations of Lockhart and Wilson and Maginn!

And Hazlitt easily surpassed the shameful shamelessness of the passage which I have quoted. In the very act to praise 'Peveril of the Peak,' he thus describes its author: "A thorough-paced partisan in his own person—intolerant, mercenary, mean; a professed toad-eater, a sturdy hack, a pitiful retailer or suborner of infamous slanders, a literary Jack Ketch, who would greedily sacrifice any one of another way of thinking as a victim to prejudice and power, and yet would do it by other hands rather than appear in in it himself." Yet Hazlitt was intelligent enough to know that such works of genius as the Waverley Novels do not proceed from Jack Ketch. He merely indulged once more his taste for invective, and showed himself a finer artist in this kind of writing than any of his contemporaries.

Spiteful as he is against all those with whom he disagreed, Hazlitt reserved the finest of his fury for Mr Blackwood and his staff. Long after they had forgotten to mention him, he refrained not his hand from insult. When he talks of the "filth and slime of the 'Quarterly Review,'" he cannot help adding, "or its drain, Blackwood's 'Edinburgh Magazine.'" Mr Blackwood is represented always as a "sycophant," and is warned to "take care how he implicates any really respectable char-

acter by defending it." And then in a violent *crescendo* of insult he involves in his literary hatred the whole Scottish nation. Not even James Howell himself shrieked more loudly than did Hazlitt against the Scots. "If they are not withheld by conscience or prudence," says he, "they have no *mauvaise honte*, no involuntary qualms or tremors, to qualify their effrontery and disregard of principle. Their impudence is extreme, their malice is cold-blooded, covert, crawling, deliberate, without the frailty or excuse of passion. They club their vices and their venality together, and by the help of both together are invincible. The choice spirits who have lately figured in a much-talked-of publication, with 'old Sylvanus at their head'—

> 'Leaning on cypress straddle stout,'

in their 'pious orgies' resemble a troop of Yahoos, or a herd of Satyrs—

> 'And with horned feet they beat the ground!'

that is to say, the floor of Mr Blackwood's shop!"

Thus Hazlitt, with his tongue in his cheek, let us hope, indicted a nation. After such ebullitions of anger and malice, no sane man could resent what others said of him, or take his own expressions of fury seriously. The battle between Hazlitt and 'Blackwood's Magazine' was, in truth, a slanging match, and nothing more.[1] It began with the letter of "The Old Friend with a New Face"; it was continued by Hazlitt in that lively article, some passages of which see the light for the first time in these pages, and afterwards *passim*. That Hazlitt kept it up longer than his adversaries reflects little credit on his humour. A sense of proportion might have suggested that the world was weary of or indifferent to the play of his cudgel. While the fight lasted the blows exchanged were shrewd, and the gravity of the combatants was well simulated. To-day, happily, the manners of controversy are restrained, and personal allusions are rightly out of favour. Nor will the ancient method be revived until there arises among us a band of writers carelessly conscious of a talent for "flyting." Meanwhile, it is satisfactory to remember that Lockhart and Wilson's attacks upon Hazlitt did not lessen the public estimation of his work, any more than Hazlitt's far grosser libels damaged the noble character of Sir Walter Scott. If a writer deserve remembrance, all the hostile criticism in the world shall not strike a blow at his living fame. For it is as true to-day as ever it was, that no man was ever written down except by himself.

CHARLES WHIBLEY.

---

[1] Had the battle been of life and death, Mr Blackwood would not have been part publisher of Hazlitt's 'Table-Talk,' nor would the author have permitted Mr Blackwood's intervention.

H.M.S. ——.

XXXV. THROUGH AN ADMIRALTY WINDOW.

THE room was exactly the same as any room in any Government building, except that the Naval observer would have at once noticed one fact—that the furniture was of the unchanging Admiralty pattern. The roll-top desk, the chairs, and even the lamp-shades, would have been to him familiar friends. They were certainly familiar to the Post-Captain who sat at the desk. Captain Henry Ranson had been a noted Commander before his retirement—a man of whom many tales, both true and apocryphal, still circulated when Senior Officers of the Fleet forgathered at the lunch intervals of Courts-Martial and Inquiries. He had little opportunity in his present War appointment to display any of the characteristics on which his Sagas had been based, for neither seamanship, daring, or, well — Independent Initiative, were quite in keeping with the routine of an Admiralty Office.

To-day he was feeling the claustrophobia of London more acutely than usual. The sun was shining through the big window across the room, and he wanted to rise and look out at the blue sky and white cloud-tufts that he knew to be showing over the buildings across the Horse Guards Parade. His desk gave him no view through the window—he knew the weakness of his powers of concentration on his eternal paper work too well to have allowed himself such a distraction; but as the door opened to admit his clerk—a firm and earnest civilian with the zeal of monastic officialdom shining through his spectacles—he rose abruptly and moved out into the sunlight glare.

"Yes, Collins? What is it?"

"A small matter, sir, which is not quite in order. If you will glance through this you will no doubt agree with me."

The Captain took the sheets from the clerk's outstretched hand and moved a little away from the glaring light to read.

SIR,—I have the honour to bring to your notice the conduct of Skipper A. P. Marsh, of the Admiralty tug *Annie Laurie*, on the 22nd-23rd November 1917, and I beg to recommend him for decoration in view of the following facts:—

On November 21st, 1917, the steamer *Makalaka*, homeward bound with corn, was shelled by a U-boat when near the Irish coast. The enemy was dealt with by a patrol in the vicinity, but the *Makalaka*, proceeding east at full speed in accordance with instructions, was thrown out of her reckoning by a damaged compass, and found herself at dusk on a lee shore off the Galway

coast, with her shaft broken (a result of shell damage which had not been realised to be serious at the time it was incurred). Skipper Marsh, seeing her flares from his patrol to seaward, most gallantly closed her and took her in tow in a rising N.W. gale. In view of the probability of the attempt to tow failing, the crew of the *Makalaka* were taken aboard the tug, but the towing was continued through a full gale lasting twenty-four hours until the ship was out of danger.—I have the honour to be, sir, &c.

The Post-Captain folded the letter carefully and placed it on his desk. The clerk retrieved it, and moved towards the door. The Captain turned, "What are you going to do with that, Collins?"

"I take it that it needs only the usual reply, sir—that this is not approved—with a reference to the regulation bearing on the case."

"Why not approved, Collins?"

The clerk was shocked, and his tone showed it. "Because that decoration is for gallant action in face of the enemy, and this case does not come within its scope. In any case the man will get salvage." [The Captain made an impatient gesture.] "If the Royal Humane Society care to——" he stopped, because the Captain had walked to the window, and, in obvious inattention to the speaker, was staring out across the wide Horse Guards and far beyond the fleecy clouds that drifted across the sky over the great sea of buildings that hemmed him in.

Captain Ranson had gone on a journey—back through forty years of time, and across eighty-one degrees of longitude.

He ran up the gangway, straightened his helmet and dirk-belt, and approached the Commander, who, a tall dark-featured figure, was standing looking down on the boat as she rose and fell alongside to the gentle heave of the Indian Ocean—"Second cutter manned, sir."

The Commander turned and looked the boy over beneath his heavy eyebrows. "When are you going to set up a new port shroud?" he asked.

The Midshipman fingered the seam of his trousers, and looked carefully at the buttons on the Commander's tunic, "I thought, sir, that is, we've got a new shroud all fitted, but I thought—the coxswain said, sir—that the old one would do for to-day as the wind's nothing. . . ."

The barometric indications of the Commander's eyes showed threatening weather. He took the boy's arm in the grasp of a heavy hand and led him to the rail abreast the swinging mastheads of the boat.

"Now listen, young gentleman," he said. "What the coxswain said isn't evidence. It's *you* that command that boat, and *you* that will handle and command her. Don't talk

to me again as if you were a schoolboy." The Midshipman shivered and squinted cautiously up to see if the storm-signals were still in evidence. The dark stern eyes were looking down at him in a way that made him feel as if he was some luckless worm that had unhappily bored its way up into the publicity of an aviary. The Commander moved his hand and turned the boy to face him. "Now, you remember this, young gentleman, only seamen come through gales safely, it's the fools that go to sea with rusty shrouds and weak rigging. And if you're to be a seaman you must never go to sea, even in a flat calm, unless your ship is ready for a gale of wind. Do you understand me?"

"Yes, sir."

"Then don't forget it, or I'll have you beaten till you grow corns. Now shove off, and pull away three cables on the port bow, drop your anchor on the shoal, and fit that new shroud. Remain there till the ship has got under way, done her night-firing, and signalled you to carry on. You will then close and weigh the target moorings, having the target ready for hoisting when the ship comes back to you. Do you understand?"

"Yes, sir."

"What have you got on your anchor?"

"A hundred and twenty fathom, sir—of four-inch."

"That is enough—there is thirty fathom on the shoal—Carry on!"

The Midshipman ran down the gangway, and, jumping into the cutter, "Carried on." The Commander was an officer of whom the boat-midshipmen stood in awe, and they were always thankful when the ordeal of reporting a possibly unready boat to him as "ready" was over.

The last shot kicked up a yellow fountain of spray in the glare of the searchlight, and ricochetted, humming, over the target and on towards Malaya. A rocket sailed up from the distant ship—the searchlight flickered out a couple of Morse signs, and went out, and in the velvety darkness of a tropic night the hands went forward in the cutter to weigh the anchor, the process of "shortening-in" having been accomplished a full hour ago. As the Midshipman stood up to superintend the operation, he saw a queer white line spreading and brightening along the horizon to the westward. A dash of rain struck his face, and a little gust of wind moaned past him. The crew looked up from their work to wonder, and in a matter of seconds the squall was on them. The wet hawser slipped and raced out, the hands jumping aft to get clear of the leaping turns as the cutter swung and drew hard on her anchor to the pressure of a tremendous wind. The white line rushed down on them, and showed as a turmoil of frothing sea, beaten flat by the wind into a sheet of phosphorescence veiled by low-flying spray. For a few

minutes they crouched and endured the sudden cold and wet, then a yaw of the boat sent the bowmen forward with suspicion in their minds. "Up and down, sir—anchor's aweigh," came the report, in a voice that started as a roar, but reached the Midshipman aft as a faint high wail. The Midshipman faced round to leeward, and thought hard. He had been anchored on the only possible shoal, and once driven off that there was no holding-ground till he should reach the edge of the surf off Trincomalee, twenty miles away — all between being charted as "Five hundred and no bottom." He called to the coxswain and clawed his way forward, picking up men by name as he passed them. They hove up their anchor, secured mainsail, awning, and mainmast in a dreadful tangle of rope and canvas to the anchor-ring—hitched an outlying corner of the tangle to a bight far up the hawser, and threw all over the bows. The cutter steadied head to wind, and the hands moved aft to raise the bow and protect themselves against the steady driving of the spray.

The Midshipman lay across the backboard, staring out to the port-quarter. Through the white haze he could see, at regular intervals, a quick-flashing gleam of yellow light. He knew what it was, and it did not comfort him. It was all he could see of the twenty-thousand candle-power of Foul Point Light, and although it was not getting much clearer it was certainly "drawing" from aft forward. He had the rough lie of the coast in his head, and he was just realising two things—first, that in spite of the sea-anchor he was being blown to leeward and ashore at an incredible rate; and second, that if he could not round Foul Point across the wind, he was going to be food for the big surf-sharks before the morning.

He roused the crew again, and set down to the oars. Before half the oars were out he had realised the futility of the effort, and was trying to get them back without further damage. He corrected his error with the loss of four oars and several feet of the cutter's gunwale—broken off when the wind tore the long ash oars away. As he remembered later, it was at this point that Foul Point Light began to show clearly through the spray, and that his coxswain began to sing an interminable hymn in the stern-sheets, and that the dark-faced Celtic stroke-oar, a man who had the reputation of being the worst character in all the ship, took over the helpless coxswain's duty. The Midshipman was staring fascinated at the swinging beam of light that was beating on them from the sand-spit broad on the quarter, when the stroke-oar's voice in his ear changed him from a boy to an officer—"What'll you do now, sir?"

The question was answered on the instant—"All hands, up masts and sails. Close-reef both, and pass the hawser aft. Lash out now, lads, and get down to it."

That twenty-minute evolution, by the light of a hurricane-lamp, was a nightmare. The mainsail and mainmast were all snarled up in miscellaneous turns of roping. The hawser was wet and cold, and seemed fifty times its original length, but the work was done. He had felt that no shroud, however new, would stand the strain he was going to put on the masts, and though the men cursed and swore at the delay and toil involved, he got what he wanted from them. One at a time the masts were hove up and clamped in position against the half-solid wind — the hawser, cut to length, clove-hitched round each masthead, and frapped clear round the cutter, with the whole hove taut with "Spanish Windlasses," till his clumsy hemp shrouds were braced to the strain. Then he braced himself by a glance at the light, swinging well over their heads now that they were close enough in to feel the first lift and heave of the outer surf, and yelled an order. The foresail rose, clattered furiously a moment against the mast, and then filled with a bang. "*Set mainsail!*" The cutter heeled over till her lee gunwale dipped—the masts bent and creaked, and the old boat went tearing into the wind on the best and last sail of her varied life. The Midshipman and the stroke-oar clung to the long tiller that was curved like a fishing-rod under the strain. There were no gusts or variations in the wind: it beat solidly against the canvas, heeling the cutter to the verge of capsizing, and driving her through the water at steamer speed. The leeway was extraordinarily great—the boat going sideways almost as fast as she went ahead; but that leeway saved her from going over. They cut through the outer surf off the point, the boat leaking from the sprung keel to the opened seams where the frapping hawser-turns bit into her thin sides — the crew baling furiously to keep their minds from the expectation of a great crash that would tell of a mast tearing its heel up and out through the weather side. It lasted for barely half an hour, but the arm-weary Midshipman felt as if it had been a four-hour watch. As the light drew aft, he eased his sheets and swung up the channel, still at racing speed, but safely bound for harbour. His memories in after years of the next few hours were vague and clouded by sleep. He remembered the sun rising as they drew in towards the silent white-walled dockyard; the *swish* of sand under the keel as he ran her hard up the boat-camber beach, and nothing more, till he woke to see the dreaded Commander — a tall white-clad figure — standing over him, looking with keen appraising eyes at the mass of hawser-turns that swathed boat and masts, and at the snoring bodies of the crew that lay on the hot sand around her.

The Clerk fidgeted. He had been kept waiting for a matter of seconds, and he did not like

it. The Captain turned to face him, and, to the surprised eyes of the Clerk, seemed to have changed suddenly into a young man—alert, quick, and decisive. "*No,* Collins," said a strange voice; "the man *did* act in the face of the enemy, and I will endorse the recommendation." He turned his eyes again to the window, but saw only the yellow gravel, the houses, and the smoke; the fetters of Routine seemed to clank warningly in his ears. "Yes," he said, "I have no reason to suppose the U-boat had not followed the steamer, or that she was not present all the time."

XXXVI. A MOST UNTRUE STORY.

The War was only in its first childhood and patrol work was still amusing, having not yet become a monotonous and unexciting business. The submarine was due to start back from patrol that night, and was just loafing along at twenty odd feet depth waiting for dark. The Captain was on watch at the periscope, swinging the instrument round from time to time to take a general survey of the horizon, but for the most part confining his scrutiny to the island to leeward. The island showed up clearly—the light of the setting sun flashing back from the windows of the buildings that looked out over the Bight. As the Captain took one of his all-round glances, he checked suddenly and concentrated his gaze to one point of the compass. A man who leaned against a pump six feet away—a man who had seemed to all appearance to be on the verge of sleep—opened his eyes, straightened up, and stood alertly watching the brown hands that held the periscope training handles. The signal seemed to be telepathically passed on, as in a few seconds there were six or eight pairs of eyes watching the observer, who still peered at the unknown sight which no one else in the boat could see. Then the Captain moved his head back from the eye-piece, smiled (and at the smile six of the watchers reverted to their oil-stained reading matter), and called to the First-Lieutenant, who was at the moment engaged with an Engine-room Artificer in a mumbled inquest over a broken air-valve spindle. As the First-Lieutenant approached, the Captain stepped to one side and indicated the eye-piece by a nod. His subordinate took his place, and for a full half-minute remained slowly swivelling the great instrument through four points and back again. When he raised his head he was scowling and sullen.

"Well?" said the Captain. "A good few there, eh?"

"*Lord!*" The First-Lieutenant's voice indicated the deepest disgust. "Thousands and thousands—and we can't get a shot at 'em!"

"Well, there's over a thousand, anyway. I've seen at

least that lot of teal in the last couple of minutes."

"*Teal!* Why, sir, I can see mallard now for the next half mile, and I could swear there'll be geese among them too."

"Here, let me look. Yes, by gum, and not one's getting up either. They let the periscope get to a few feet off before they paddle away . . ." He swivelled slowly round the circle, then looked up at the First-Lieutenant. "There's fog coming on. I can see the banks coming," he said. He looked again through the periscope and intently studied the windows on the island some three miles away. The First-Lieutenant watched his face, and saw it slowly break into the smile of a schoolboy meditating mischief. The First-Lieutenant began to smile slightly also. The Captain looked up.

"I can't help the island," he said. "War's hell, anyway. Give me a rifle and stand by for surface." There was a clatter and the sound of quick-passing orders; the boat's bow tilted up, and to the sound of roaring air she broke surface fairly in the middle of the great colony of swimming wildfowl. The hatch fell back with a clang and a rush of cold air beat on the excited faces of the men below the conning-tower. Immediately there came the *Crack-crack-'rack* of magazine-fire from the bridge above, and the descendants of bowmen who had risked mutilation and death to steal the Conqueror's deer forgot their discipline and began to mount the ladder that led to the sunlight and a clear view.

The Captain turned to shout a helm order below and swore at the packed heads that filled the hatch-rim. ". . . and you come up, Number One, and lend a hand to pick up. I've got one—missed him on the water at a hundred and got him in the air as he rose! There he is—jump forr'd and grab him—dammit, he's off (*crack-crack*) . . . No, that's stopped him" (*bang*—the report came from the vicinity of the Captain's knee). "What the — confound you, man — what the deuce are you doing? Unload that pistol and take it away . . ."

Seven thousand yards away on the island a watcher lowered his glasses and reached for the button of the alarm bell. In two seconds the island was awake, and down in the lower battery men rushed to their stations. With clatter and turmoil the big guns were cleared away and the observing officer roared the order to "Stand by" into the telephone mouthpiece.

"What is it, Schultz? Can you see? Ach! she is going to bombard—the little swine of a boat. Give me the telescope. Ach, Gott! are they not reported ready, fool?" The Major was excited and bristling.

"Ready now—all but number six."

"At six thousand five hundred metres—all guns—Gott strafe der schmutzige . . . he has dived!"

The First-Lieutenant sprang up the outer ladder of the conning-tower, the bleeding spoil clutched in his hand. The Captain turned to look astern and became aware of the fact that the gallery, as represented by the bridge and rails, was tenanted by an enthusiastic and interested selection of his crew. "What the devil—is this a cinema or my ship? Don't you know your orders yet? Every man-jack of you . . ." He herded them below to the tune of a voluble hymn of hate, and followed the last of the grinning culprits down. As the boat levelled off at her previous diving depth, he swung the periscope round to search the horizon again to seaward. A moment later "Diving stations," and to the hydroplane men, "Take her on down."

The First-Lieutenant left the luckless mallard on the table and elbowed his way aft again through the cluster of men closing up to their stations. Reaching the control position, he looked inquiringly at the Captain, who, having lowered the periscope, was leaning with folded arms against a group of valves abreast it.

"Thick fog coming down. Going to bottom till dark now. Have a look at the soundings, will you—or tell Henley to let me know."

The First-Lieutenant moved back to speak to another officer, who was already bending over the chart-table. The Captain turned his head to watch the gauge beside him, the needle of which was slowly creeping upwards and around the circle. As it moved the gentle rolling of the boat that had been noticeable before ceased, and she steadied until she gave the idea of being high and dry in some silent dock. The officer, generally known as "Pilot" or —to his intimates and contemporaries—as "Rasputin" (a name, it should be explained, which had no possible application to him, except for the fact that he wore a beard), appeared at the Captain's side with a folded chart in his hand.

"We should touch at ninety by the gauge, sir," he said. "We must be about four miles from the land now."

The Captain nodded. "Yes, it may be a little more, though. Have the crew got a sweep on this?"

"No, sir. This is an extra dive, and they haven't had time to get one up. D'you want to bet on under or over ninety, sir?"

"I do not. I won last night's sweep, and lost it to you in side-bets, and I'm not taking any more. Stop the motors!"

The gauge had reached the eighty-foot mark, and the boat under the influence of her headway was still driving the needle slowly round. At ninety feet the Captain looked at the Pilot, smiled, and started the motors again. Hardly had he given the order when the needle checked, rose a little, and then crept back to ninety-five. "*Stop the motors!* I've lost a chance there, Pilot—'Wish I'd had a bet on that."

He stood watching the gauge

a moment longer, and then turned to walk to the Ward-room.

"Pipe down—usual sentries only," he ordered. "Tell my servant to get me some washing water."

He threw the curtain aside, and joined the two officers who stood looking solemnly at the mallard, which lay on a gory newspaper in the centre of the table. For a moment there was silence.

"Well," said the Captain cheerfully, "it's not as smashed as it might be. It'll do for a pie to-morrow."

"'Mm," said the First-Lieutenant, "'Keeper at home used to call rabbits that looked like that 'ferrets' food.'"

"Not a bit of it," rejoined the Captain; "if we mash him in a pie he'll be all right."

There was another pause while the First-Lieutenant tucked an extra fold of newspaper beneath the corpse—then, after a quick glance and nudge for the Pilot's benefit, he spoke in a detached and dispassionate voice.

"Of course, it was poaching."

The Captain's brown face began to slowly take on the colour of the gore on the table—then he exploded—

"What d'you mean? . . . *poaching*—it's below high-water mark, isn't it?"

"Well, sir—we don't know the rules in this country, and we were pretty well in their waters."

"But it's offshore. Why shouldn't I shoot their duck? It's not preserved, either. *Poaching!* I never poached anything—not since I was at school anyway." He scowled at the duck and the officers impartially. The officers clutched each other by the arms, then the Pilot walked hastily to a low-set bunk and buried his head in the pillow. The Captain changed his frown for a smile as the situation dawned on him, then, snatching the parallel rulers from the chart-table he began to belabour the most accessible portion of his gurgling subordinate's anatomy.

KLAXON.

MUSINGS WITHOUT METHOD.

THE MURDER OF THE TSAR—AUTOCRACY AND DEMOCRACY—THE CRIMES OF THE BOLSHEVIKS—BOLSHEVIKISM IN INDIA—"THE FAITH THAT IS IN US"—THE HYPOCRISY OF SELF-DETERMINATION—A NEW POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY—A GENERAL ELECTION—A USELESS BLUNDER—1832 AND 1918.

THE murder of the Tsar, a foul deed perpetrated by the Bolsheviks and encouraged by their friend and patron, the German Emperor, is the natural consequence of revolution. After a mock trial Nicholas II. was found guilty of crimes against his country. What these crimes were is not specified and does not matter. The excuse for murder is always secondary, and there is no argument framed by the mob of scoundrels called Bolsheviks which can carry conviction to an honest man's mind. After the same fashion, and with as little cause, Louis XVI. went to the guillotine more than a hundred years ago. He, poor man, was alleged to have made some sort of assault upon "liberty," and the champions of this illusory quality proved their own forbearing love of it by slaughtering those who were not in agreement with them.

When Louis XVI. was done to death, a thrill of horror ran through Europe. Even Talleyrand, least sentimental of men, was overcome by despondency, and retired to the country. "Tout ce qui avait le cœur français," said he, "a besoin de solitude." England put on mourning for the dead monarch, and "war with a doctrine" became inevitable. In how different a spirit was the news of the Tsar's murder received! It made but a ripple upon the surface of things. The war, and all that it means for Europe and the world, keeps the minds of men busy, and few there were who had a thought to spare for the man who had failed in a task too great for human endurance or sagacity, and who fell a victim, not to ambition or to a love of injustice, but to duty.

It was the hard fate of Nicholas II. to be called to the governance of a country inharmonious in its elements. He could have won success only by the goodwill and co-operation of all classes. Autocracy was imposed upon him not merely by inheritance but by the very nature of the task laid upon him. To govern a country made up of a Russian upper class, a Russian lower class, and a vast intermediate mass of hungry Germans, was not possible for any one who did not exact obedience and insist upon control. The simulacrum of popular government which Nicholas called into being under the name of the Duma was all that the people of Russia could manage or

understand. None but a fanatic would dare to drag a country, still in the fourteenth century of our development, into all the shams and trickeries practised in the twentieth century in the name of "freedom." Nicholas, then, was an autocrat by temperament and by necessity. And since to-day the word "democrat" has a sweetness of sound which surpasses in beauty the music of the spheres, the whole world is in a conspiracy to blacken his memory and to condone the crime of his murder.

Yet he asks our sorrow, not our condemnation. He was, after his fashion, an idealist. He saw visions of peace where peace can never be, and the meetings at the Hague, loudly acclaimed by our sentimentalists, who pretended that the age of gold was already come, were due to his initiative. He was misguided, no doubt, as idealists commonly are, and he has his reward in the abuse of the very sentimentalists who took credit for the work which he did. Nor will the part which he played at the outset of the war be frowned upon by future historians. He stood loyally by the side of the Entente, which he had helped to create, and by his firm attitude made the unity of the Allies certain. More than this, by a stroke of the pen he converted his country forcibly to temperance, and abolished the curse of vodka, which would surely have weakened the fighting forces of Russia. The fact that his nation was not prepared for war may not wholly be set down to his discredit. It was beyond the power of mortal man to knit up into an effective fighting force the scattered hordes of Russia, men held together neither by common speech nor by common sentiment. But what was possible he achieved, and he may claim his share of the praise which is due to many a brilliant advance, and to the bravest retreat recorded in the annals of the war.

And even when the revolution came the Tsar was gravely misjudged. It was not easy to obtain news from Russia, and that which came to us was tainted at the source. On all hands we were told that German influence had corrupted the Court of Russia, and that a revolution was the first necessity of carrying on the war. Those who made it, we heard, had but one thought—patriotism; but one policy—to defeat Germany in the field. Had this all been true, had the Tsar professed German sympathies, had a forcible change of government been essential for the conduct of the campaign, then the revolution would have been justified. No excuse could be pleaded for a Tsar who, for the sake of peace, was prepared to give his country, and Europe too, over, bound hand and foot, to Germany. But we know now, from the authentic stories told by returning travellers, that the Tsar was unto the end the foe of the Kaiser, that he did his best to foil the plots which the Huns were making against

his throne and his fatherland. The more light that is thrown upon a sinister intrigue, the more clearly will the Tsar be justified. Moreover, of whatever weakness the Tsar may have been guilty, one thing is certain: those who dared to snatch the reins from his hands—reins which they were powerless to hold—instantly drove the carriage of the Russian state down a steep place to destruction.

Let the work of the Tsar be judged by what was done in Russia after his abdication, and history will acquit him. No sooner had others taken up the heavy burden of responsibility than anarchy reigned, gaunt and unchecked. The ineffable Kerensky, a man of words, not deeds, a rhetorician who thought that a glib tongue was better than a stout arm, destroyed at a blow the discipline of the army. After this wicked surrender to the "people" resistance was impossible, and the mob in Russia turned lightly from the defence of their country to pillage and rapine. When all men were bidden to do as they pleased, murder stalked abroad in the street; cruelty was enthroned as a goddess, with theft and terror for her handmaidens. And then the motley crowd of criminals and Jews, of Lenins and the Trotskys, suborned by Germany, completed the direful work of anarchy. These miscreants sold their land, or the land in which they had been permitted to sojourn, to Germany, and put whatever price was paid for it in their own pocket. The peace of Brest-Litovsk, an undying disgrace to Germany, is a disgrace also to the rascals daring to call themselves Russians who signed it. Nothing ever done by a Tsar was worse than this betrayal; and though it is but one act in the pitiful drama of revolution, the doing of it and its effect will never be forgotten.

And in the train of revolution there now follow all the expected ills. To the perverse and insolent democracy, led by Lenin and Trotsky, Russia owes the further benefits of famine and cholera and plague. Against these woes the autocracy had effectively protected the people. Under the malign influence of the Soviets they have overrun the country. That is what happens always when greedy scoundrels, to satisfy ambition or to fill an empty pocket, pretend to the duties of government, which are far beyond their reach. The unspeakable Lenin, the criminal Trotsky, had no gifts of thought or speech to take the place of the tradition upheld by the Tsar. They knew not how to feed the people; they knew not how to save it from pestilence. Their cures for all evils were pillage and murder, and they put them in force with all their active frivolity. We shall see presently, when history lifts the veil, the havoc which they wrought. The historians of the future will record the crimes of the Red Guards and pass a fitting judgment. And it would be well if those who are eager

to condemn the Tsar unheard, because he had not a simple faith in the ballot-box as a quack medicine of universal application, would reflect what was the state of the country on the day of his abdication, and to what a depth of ignominy and misery it has sunk to-day. Moreover, the demagogues who have surrendered without a protest to Germany, are "popular governors" in name only. They have fastened such a tyranny upon those who do not agree with them as easily outstrips any system devised by autocrats. Nobody who is not of their party is permitted to move and live as he chooses. Death is the common guerdon of his intemperate desire. An assembly, elected by the sacred vote, which refuses to register the despotic decrees of Lenin and Trotsky, is not allowed to meet. And any suggestion of a return to a happier, safer life is denounced as "reaction" by the sentimentalists.

The sentimentalists, in truth, pretend to believe that the vices of a democracy are always better than the virtues of an autocracy. The old principle that "the king can do no wrong" has been perverted to the foolish fallacy that "the people can do no wrong." Whenever revolution has drenched the world in blood, the democrats have loudly expressed their approval. When Louis XVI. lost his head upon the scaffold, that pious democrat, Thomas Jefferson, who hitherto had lavished his insincere praise upon the "friend of America," hastily changed his tune. "We have just received here the news of the decapitation of the King of France. Should the present foment in Europe not produce republics everywhere, it will at least soften the monarchical governments by rendering monarchs amenable to punishment like other criminals." Jefferson's gratitude was as short-lived as his intelligence was ill-founded, but no doubt he thought the phrase "other criminals" an excellent invention. But while he applauded the death of a monarch who had served his country well, doubtless he excluded from the list of "criminals" popularly-elected Ministers. These have enjoyed every immunity until the present day. They might shirk their responsibilities as they chose, and still draw their pay in majesty. France, however, has created a new and a wise precedent. The banishment of M. Malvy proves that a popular Minister can yet be punished, and now that the precedent is established, let us hope that it will be followed wherever corruption be discovered or a dereliction of duty be proved.

Thus we may see in the past as in the present that the dogmatic democrat darkly confuses the moral values. A devout disciple of Tolstoi the fanatic, not Tolstoi the man of genius, Mr Aylmer Maude, has set forth what he thinks to be the crimes of Nicholas II. In the first place, he complains that "on May 18, 1896, the gross mismanagement by court favourites of the coro-

nation festivities at Moscow occasioned the death of over 3000 people and the injury of several more thousands." After the tragedy Nicholas II. attended a ball, as in duty bound. "Nero fiddled while Rome burnt, and Nicholas danced while the Khodinka victims were dying." A wickeder attack upon a man's reputation, whether the man be Tsar or ploughman, than this cannot be imagined. It was Nero himself who set fire to Rome, and took pleasure in his own act of destruction. If the Tsar had with his own hand and purposely caused the deaths, which none deplored more poignantly than he, Mr Maude's foolish statement might be excused. But not even Mr Maude brings a charge of murder against the victim of fate, and his rhetoric is meaningless and irrelevant. Again, Mr Maude pompously blames Nicholas II. for pledging himself to "maintain the principle of autocracy as firmly as his never-to-be-forgotten parent." Is this, then, a crime in an autocrat? And do not the imbecility of Kerensky and the vile excesses of Lenin and Trotsky prove that the Tsar was in the right? For Russia, at the stage of development which she has reached, autocracy is the one wise form of government, and she will recover it by a sane reaction, or she will perish in anarchy. At any rate, autocracy did not drive her to ruin and dismemberment; and if those who believe in democracy as a sovereign cure for all the ills that flesh is heir to can look unmoved upon the havoc that has been wrought in Russia, they are blinded by superstition and far beyond the reach of reason.

Nicholas II. was murdered by the instruments of the Kaiser. Had the master of Lenin and Trotsky lifted his finger the life of the Tsar would have been spared. And let him not pretend to himself that such a precedent is without weight or influence. Before the head of Mary Stuart fell upon the scaffold she warned her executioners that they were showing the way to others, and that hers would not be the last royal head to fall. The Tsar and the Kaiser were the last two autocrats of Europe. The one wished for nothing but the prosperity of his empire; the other was consumed by the passion of pillage and conquest. And if the Kaiser march after his last colleague to the scaffold, whose will be the fault? He has shown the way, and he will win no more than he deserves, if his ominous example be followed.

All the world over, Bolshevikism seems to be in the fashion. Undeterred by the fate of Russia, our Government has set itself gravely to relax "the bonds of superior official authority in India." We do not propose here to discuss the changes which, with characteristic levity, our Ministers intend to force upon India with as little discussion as may be. But we would say something about the political philosophy,

or the lack of it, which underlies the Report on Indian Constitutional Reform, and the high-handed manner in which these reforms are being forced upon the country. To begin with, Mr Montagu seems to think himself in some way or other personally involved in the controversy. It is not for him an agreement between India and the rest of the British Empire, but an agreement between India and Mr Montagu. In a speech which he made some time since in the presence of Lord Morley, Mr Montagu adopted a tone of defiance. "The things that Lord Morley and his colleagues did and taught to the world he was determined," so he said, "however great the difficulty and however loud the opposition, to go on with, and wherever he might find himself, and in whatever place he might be, to work all he knew and all he could to place India on the indisputable road to the final vindication and justification of the glorious British connection with India—responsible, complete, self-governed." Hoity-toity! Mr Montagu may be a very great man, but he is not yet a despot. In six months he may be in opposition or out of Parliament. Worshipper as he is of the democracy, he should remember that he is not a tenant for life, but merely the elect of an accidental majority. Nor does it seem tactful of Mr Montagu to have referred, before Lord Morley himself, to what that politician and Lord Minto had done and taught. For their teaching was in direct opposition to Mr Montagu's. Mr Montagu looks forward to an India—responsible, complete, self-governed. "If it could be said that this chapter of reforms," — thus spoke Lord Morley of his own policy,—"led directly or indirectly to the establishment of a parliamentary system in India, I for one would have nothing at all to do with it." Perhaps, then, it would have been better if Mr Montagu had left Lord Morley out of the question.

However, it is plainly Mr Montagu's future that is at stake, not the poor future of the British Empire. "Would those who dealt with the Report," demands Mr Montagu in his hectoring voice, "ask themselves whether they admitted the principle? If they did, they could proceed to argue about the Report itself. If they did not, there was no weapon probably but personal abuse." A grosser impertinence than this we have never met in a demagogue who aspires to statesmanship. We have asked ourselves whether we admit the principle, and we have no difficulty in answering "No." In this matter we are on the side of Lord Morley. But assuredly we do not admit that "there is no weapon but personal abuse." Mr Montagu is but a name to us—a name which, we believe, is not his own. We have no opinion good or bad about him. Our one criticism of his appointment is that he is unfitted by his blood to represent

Great Britain in a discussion with India. It now appears, by his own statement, that he is unfitted by temper also. And, having said so much about Mr Montagu, we will assure him that we like personal abuse as little as we like the principle of the Report of Indian Constitutional Reform, and shall forget all about him.

The political principle which underlies the Report is that responsible self-government is good at all times and in all places. It is based upon faith, not upon knowledge or foresight, and with faith it is not easy to argue. A man who is colour-blind will compare red with green, and believe, in spite of others' experience, that the grass is of a warm vermilion. And those who are responsible for the Indian report take it for granted that self-government in some form or other is a boon after which all men must strive. Even though a loss of efficiency and happiness should result, political freedom is the only prize that it is worth climbing up the greasy pole of life to seize. The pleasant life of the hustings and the ballot-box, the plots of the caucus, the venal sale of titles, the profitable resolution to root honour itself in dishonour, the manifold shapes and forms of corruption incident to what is ironically known as "liberty," —all these seem priceless boons to those who have enjoyed them, and with no niggard hand they would share them with others.

Such is the initial fallacy which destroys the value of Lord Chelmsford's Report. Before it can boast of any political value, it should prove, first of all, that India cannot be happy without relaxing the bond of Imperial authority, and that it is ready and willing to accept the burden of responsible government. So far as we can understand the Report, it gives no support to any argument based upon the desires or necessities of the Indian people. Though the ultimate aim of Lord Chelmsford's reforms is to give India some form of Home Rule, Mr Montagu assures us—we must apologise for referring once more to the great man—that "so far as he could discover, the whole of India was opposed to Home Rule now." We may carry the assertion a step further, and prove from the Report itself that only the smallest "handful of agitators" demands, consciously, any reform at all.

The Report reminds us that "the speeches of English and American statesmen, proclaiming the necessity for destroying German militarism, and for conceding the right of self-determination to the nations, have had much effect upon political opinion in India, and have contributed to give new force and vitality for the demand for self-government, which was making itself more widely heard among the progressive section of the people." Here, then, we have a clear statement of a democratic principle, made in Germany,

no doubt, and used to hypnotise Germany's enemies. But "self-determination" can be arrived at only by votes, and in the collection of votes, as every true democrat knows, no advantage must be given to prudence or to education. It is, indeed, the first clause in the creed of your true Bolshevik that the proletariat alone is entitled to discharge the duties of government. Herr Lenin's eminent representative in this country has, we believe, formulated his political philosophy in these terms. And even those who do not carry Bolshevikism to its logical conclusion, would still extend the privilege of the franchise as widely as possible. What, then, would happen if India were invited to determine for herself her own future? The Report leaves us in no doubt whatever.

Of the 244 millions in British India, it is admitted 226 millions live a rural life, "and the proportion of these who ever give a thought to matters beyond the horizon of their villages is very small." They are a patient, contented folk. "What concerns them is mainly the rainfall or the irrigation supply from wells or canals, the price of grain and cloth, the payment of rent to the landlord or revenue to the State, the repayment of advances to the village banker, the observance of religious festivals, the education of their sons, the marriage of their daughters, their health and that of their cattle." Is it into this Arcadian bliss that our politicians would rush with their raucous shouts of self-determination? And how if they did bring their precious gift to the peaceful countryside, what would "self-determination" mean to the amiable peasants? Nothing more than Mesopotamia, that once blessed word. For, indeed, only 6 per cent of the population of India, urban or rural, can read or write, and no more than 2 millions out of 244 have any knowledge of English whatever. To speak of self-determination and Indian reform, therefore, in the same sentence is sheer nonsense. The British Government and the agitators have determined and will force upon the people of India a system which they do not want and which they cannot understand.

When the Report, therefore, speaks of self-determination, either it is attempting to create a false sympathy for its proposals, or, contrary to the practice of all good democrats, it is permitting the minority tail to wag the majority dog. In other words, it is giving way to the small number of Indian politicians who pretend to speak for the whole country, because their voices alone are audible. They are surrendering also to the agitators, some of whom, no doubt, are inspired by an echo, that has reached them, of the blessings of English political "freedom"; while others, irreconcilable, are merely obeying the behests of Germany and spending German money. It is the habit of our Government to yield always to clamour and lawless-

ness. The women who burned churches and committed orgies of unseemliness in the streets were rewarded with the vote, and the Bengal anarchists, who "established communication both with German agents and with agents of the revolutionary party outside India," have had far more influence upon our Government than the vast majority of industrious, law-abiding, contented Indians. But, again, that does not make for "self-determination," and since that pretext may be ruled out as wholly insincere, no argument remains save that, already mentioned, of blind unquestioning faith in the sanctity of "Liberal institutions."

Nor can the writers of the Report put forth the excuse that our system of government in India has failed. It admits that that system has been "constructed by builders who had no models before them, during a century and a half of steadfast purpose and honourable aim; a system which has won the admiration of critical observers from many lands, and to which other nations that found themselves called upon to undertake a similar task of restoring order and good government in disturbed countries have always turned for inspiration and guidance. England may be proud of her record in India." The success of the system is obviously a good reason for upsetting it. The system has been an inspiration and a guide to those who cared for good government. Therefore abolish it. England may be proud of what she has done. Lower her pride at once. That is what it is proposed to achieve, at the risk of disturbing the welfare of hundreds of millions. Nor is any reason alleged for the coming change. The autocrats, who impose their will upon the Empire, disdain argument. They care not whether the Indians are fit for revolution or not. As we have pointed out, they are sustained by a blind faith alone—a faith "that because our purpose is right it will be furthered by all that is best in the people of all races in India." Was there ever displayed so reckless a confusion of thought? They assume, the writers of the Report, that their "purpose is right," and there is an end of it. They admit that the number of persons "who ask for free institutions does not exceed five per cent of the population." That matters nothing; they shout "self-determination," they trample on the first principles of the democracy which they profess. And what is their reason? "Our reason," they repeat with due solemnity, "is the faith that is in us."

Thus they outrage all the tenets of political philosophy. And the famous pronouncement of August 20, 1917, promising "the gradual development of self-governing institutions with a view to the progressive realisation of responsible government in India as an integral part of the British Empire," fills them with an hysterical pride. "We take these words,"

say these modest authors, "to be the most momentous utterance ever made in India's chequered history." What might be a compliment upon disinterested lips is pure boastfulness when it comes from those who framed the utterance. But, momentous or not, the utterance, we are told, must stand inviolate for ever. Mr Lionel Curtis informs us that it is a definite and inalterable pledge. "By neglect to examine our engagements," says he, "we may sap the foundations of British credit, not merely in India, but also wherever the conference is held which must sooner or later end this war." This is nonsense, and mischievous nonsense. The arrangements which are made or not made between Great Britain and India have nothing whatever to do with the peace conference. We are still masters in our own house, enfeebled though that house be by politicians; and to pretend that the "utterance," momentous though it appear to its partial authors, pledges the country to a definite action is to misunderstand that precious boon, the palladium of our liberties, and all the rest of it—parliamentary government.

The momentous utterance, in point of fact, was made in answer to a question put by a private member. If answers to private members are to bind the Empire hand and foot, what becomes of the Constitution? We have fondly believed that we were in the full enjoyment of representative government. We have been told that the will of the people shall prevail. So sacred has the wish of the voters appeared to our governors, that we refused to arm ourselves against the power of Germany, because the people was not interested in defence. Better the destruction of the whole Empire than any interference with the supreme might of the people! And now we hear that an answer to a private member is an irrefragable engagement! The policies which of old were decided at general elections are now settled at question time. If Mr Bonar Law assures us in his best manner that "the answer is in the negative"—why can't he say No?—then disgrace attaches to us at peace conferences and other amiable resorts if we do not agree with him. Here is another principle new to politics, and its enunciation proves once more that our politicians repeat their clap-trap about the will of the people, not because they believe in it, but because the false flattery helps them to catch votes.

In all other attempts to establish "free institutions" we have heard a vast deal concerning the wisdom and fitness of the proletariat. The writers of the Indian Report do not and cannot pretend that those whom they would implicate in this conspiracy of "freedom" either want the responsibility of popular government, or would understand what it meant were it laid upon them. "The rural classes," says the Report, "have the greatest stake in the country,

because they contribute most to its revenues; but they are poorly equipped for politics, and do not at present wish to take part in them." So they must be forced. "If they won't tak' it, gar them tak' it." In other words, the Indians are to be set running down the inclined plane of "freedom," and are to be taught how to guide their steps aright as they go on. *Solvitur ambulando.* They will learn how to become citizens by walking to the ballot-box. The privilege is to be given, and the education, which might perhaps make the privilege valuable, will come after. Was there ever so foolish an example of putting the cart before the horse? But at any rate it will provide fresh activity for the hapless civil servants. When these officials "are not busy carrying out the policy of Indian ministers," they will be "helping India along her difficult journey to self-government." In other words, theirs will be the glorious duty of teaching the young idea how to vote, of explaining to the simple folk who never heard of it before the value of "graft"; and it will not be surprising if the efficient public servants who hitherto have wisely and righteously administered the affairs of India will prefer to stay at home. "The ruler ruled" is not a pleasant *rôle* for any man to fill, and though the Report offers its victims a higher pay and longer leave, it will probably offer these boons in vain.

In conclusion, we would quote one passage from an official report: "We have to bring about," says this report, "the most radical revolution in the people's traditional ideas of the relation between ruler and ruled, and it will be a difficult and even dangerous business, for it is neither safe nor easy to meddle with traditional ideas in India. Unless the political changes now in contemplation are accompanied by an educational campaign directed to awaking in all classes alike a sense of citizenship, disaster will certainly result." Disaster certainly will result. But what will that matter? Some of our Ministers, at least, will have vindicated "the faith that is in them."

Ever since the war began a spirit of utter recklessness has possessed our politicians. They know, or should know, that a sense of security at home is essential to victory in the field, and security cannot be preserved in the face of vast, superfluous changes. Yet they have run the risk of passing such a Franchise Bill as madness has never dreamed before. The barriers of sex have been broken down, and all the old safeguards, which assured some sanity of election, have been abolished. Nobody knows, and among politicians nobody seems to care, how the millions of new voters will vote. Probably our Ministers prate, like the framers of the Indian Report, of the faith that is in them. But that kind of faith, though it may make revolutions, will not win battles, and

it must be admitted that the Germans have every reason to congratulate themselves upon our domestic policy.

Now, so long as the Franchise Bill was not put to the test, it was not of great importance. As a specimen of folly in a political museum it was no better and no worse than the others. And it seemed as though there was small chance of putting it to the test. There is no necessity for a General Election. Our Ministers can easily vote themselves into perpetual office, and though they are not all heaven-born statesmen, we "would rather bear the ills we have than fly to others that we know not of." In spite of the grumblings of the pacifists, the present Government is well set upon the prosecution of the war, and that is all we would ask of it. And then suddenly comes the news of a General Election before the year is out. Why it should be held we are not told; what end it could possibly serve is hidden from us; what is certain is that they who insist upon it are involving the country in the greatest danger, and that if they make an error in their calculation they will condemn us to defeat and open shame.

A few odd men who hang about the doors of the public-house, a dozen women who take their ease with their separation allowances, may drive us into an ignominious peace. We do not know whether they will or not, because we know nothing whatever about them. It is a very pretty superstition that we can always rely upon the good sense of the British People. But the British People which, it is rumoured, will go to the polls in November next is a People of which no politician has the slightest experience. The mass of the new voters, probably, does not think much or know much, and will be an easy prey of the demagogue with a glib tongue and an evil heart. And upon the "good sense" of this vast Unknown we are staking, for no reason whatever, the future of Great Britain and of the British Empire. Suppose our new masters and mistresses bid us curtly to make a hasty peace, and with such men as Lord Lansdowne and Mr Webb, Messrs Henderson and R. Macdonald to misguide them, it is possible that this may be their bidding; then shall we be compelled, according to the rules of a foolish game, to desert our Allies and show ourselves dishonoured in the eyes of all the world.

In this crisis we have nothing but the past to teach us, and the past teaches us no lesson of encouragement. A Parliament elected upon a new franchise is generally inharmonious, wild, disjointed. The Reform Bill of 1832 was a mere nothing compared with the Reform Bill of 1917. And yet what havoc it played with the House of Commons! Bad manners, strange faces, swagger and incompetence—these were the characteristics of the new Par-

liament. The Government had no power over the House, and nothing stood between the country and anarchy save Lord Grey's Cabinet. "If he be defeated in any great measure," said Grenville, "he must either abandon the country to its fate, or consent to carry on the Government upon the condition of a virtual transfer of the executive power to the House of Commons. If this comes to pass the game is up." And as the House declined in wisdom, it grew in passion, prejudice, and folly, until a sympathetic reformer was obliged to confess "that in point of ability it was not only inferior to the last, but perhaps to any Parliament that has sat for many years."

But there is this difference between 1832 and 1918. In 1832, Great Britain was not engaged in a life-and-death struggle with an enemy who aimed at the dominion of the world. She had not pledged her faith to loyal and constant Allies. It mattered not greatly then what the House of Commons did or failed to do. Our very existence, to say nothing of our honour, will depend upon the election which threatens us under the new Franchise Act. It is not too late to draw back; it is not too late to postpone this wanton leap into the darkness. So long as they prosecute the war with energy, the present Ministers may be assured of the country's support; and a dozen general elections, even if they turned out well, could not do more than confirm that assurance. If one turned out ill—what then? Lord Lansdowne in power, and a peace by negotiation! Surely we have had gambles enough in the last four years. Cannot we now, when we ride on the wave of victory, forget all the schemes and futilities of political warfare, and determine that all our weapons, all our energies, shall be directed against the Germans?

Printed by William Blackwood and Sons.

BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE.

No. MCCXXXVI. OCTOBER 1918. Vol. CCIV.

PUSHED.

BY QUEX.

I.

By means of a lorry lift from railhead, and a horse borrowed from the Divisional D.A.C., I found Brigade Headquarters in a village that the Germans had occupied before their retreat in the spring of 1917.

The huge, red-faced, grey-haired Adjutant, best of ex-ranker officers, welcomed me on the farmhouse steps with a hard handshake and a bellowing "Cheerio!" followed by, "Now that you're back, I can go on leave."

In the mess the Colonel gave me kindly greeting, and told me something of the Brigade's ups and downs since I had left France in August 1917, wounded at Zillebeke: how all the old and well-tried battery commanders became casualties before 1917 was out, but how, under young, keen, and patiently selected leaders, the batteries were working up towards real efficiency again. Then old Swiffy, the veterinary officer, came in, and the new American doctor, who appeared armed with two copies of the 'Saturday Evening Post.' It was all very pleasant; and the feeling that men who had got to know you properly in the filthy turmoil and strain of Flanders were genuinely pleased to see you again, produced a glow of real happiness. I had, of course, to go out and inspect the Adjutant's new charger—a big rattling chestnut, conceded to him by an A.S.C. major. A mystery gift, if ever there was one: for he was a handsome beast, and chargers are getting very rare in France. "They say he bucks," explained the Adjutant. "He'll go for weeks

as quiet as a lamb, and then put it across you when you don't expect it. I'm going to put him under treatment."

"Where's my groom?" he roared. Following which there was elaborate preparation of a weighted saddle—not up to the Adjutant's 15 stone 5, but enough to make the horse realise he was carrying something; then an improvised lunging-rope was fashioned, and for twenty minutes the new charger had to do a circus trot and canter, with the Adjutant as a critical and hopeful ringmaster. In the end the Adjutant mounted and rode off, shouting that he would be back in half an hour to report on the mystery horse's preliminary behaviour.

Then the Regimental Sergeant-Major manœuvred me towards the horse lines to look at the newly made-up telephone cart team.

"You remember the doctor's fat mare, sir—the wheeler, you used to call her? Well, she is a wheeler now, and a splendid worker too. We got the hand-wheeler from B Battery, and they make a perfect pair. And you remember the little horse who strayed into our lines at Thiepval—'Punch' we used to call him—as fat as butter, and didn't like his head touched? Well, he's in the rear; and another bay, a twin to him, that the Adjutant got from the —th Division. Changed 'Rabbits' for him. You remember 'Rabbits,' sir? —nice-looking horse, but inclined to stumble. All bays now, and not a better-looking telephone team in France."

And then an anxious moment. Nearest the wall in the shed which sheltered the officers' horses stood my own horse — dear old Silvertail, always a gentleman among horses, but marked in his likes and dislikes. Would he know me after my six months' absence? The grey ears went back as I approached, but my voice seemed to awake recognition. Before long a silver-grey nose was nozzling in the old confiding way from the fourth button towards the jacket pocket where the biscuits used to be kept. All was well with the world.

A rataplan on a side-drum feebly played in the street outside! — the village crier announcing that a calf had committed hari-kari on one of the flag-poles put up to warn horsemen that they mustn't take short cuts over sown land. The aged crier, in the brown velveteen and the stained white corduroys, took a fresh breath and went on to warn the half-dozen villagers who had come to their doorways that uprooting the red flags would be in defiance of the express orders of Monsieur le Maire (who owned many fields in the neighbourhood). The veal resulting from the accident would be shared out among the villagers that evening.

My camp-bed was put up in a room occupied by the Adjutant; and during and after dinner there was much

talk about the programme of intensive training with which the Brigade was going to occupy itself while out at rest. For the morrow the Colonel had arranged a scheme — defence and counter-attack — which meant that skeleton batteries would have to be brought up to upset and demolish the remorseless plans of an imaginary German host; and there was diligent studying of F.A.T. and the latest pamphlets on Battery Staff Training, and other points of knowledge rusted by too much trench warfare.

It was exactly 2 P.M. on the morrow. We were mounted and moving off to participate in this theoretical battle, when the "chug-chug-chug" of a motor-cycle caused us to look towards the hill at the end of the village street: a despatch-rider, wearing the blue-and-white band of the Signal Service. The envelope he drew from his leather wallet was marked "urgent."

"It's real war, gentlemen," said the Colonel quickly, having read the contents; "we move at once. Corps say that the enemy are massing for an attack."

Then he gave quick, very definite orders in the alert, confident manner so well known to all his officers and men.

"Send a cycle orderly to stop Fentiman bringing up his teams! You can be ready to march by 3 P. . . ., Stone. Townsend, you'd better send off your groom to warn your battery! Times and order of march will be sent out by the Adjutant within a quarter of an hour! One hundred yards' distance between every six vehicles on the march! No motor-lorries for us this time, so all extra kit and things you can't carry will have to be dumped, and a guard left behind!"

A clatter of horsemen spreading the news followed.

I stood at the door of the village's one café and watched two of our batteries pass. The good woman who kept it asked if I thought the Germans would come there again. "They took my husband with them a prisoner when they went a year ago," she said slowly. My trust in our strength as I had seen it six months before helped me to reassure her; but to change the subject, I turned to the penny-in-the-slot music machine inside, the biggest, most gaudily painted musical box I've ever seen. "Did the Boches ever try this?" I asked. "No, only once," she replied, brightening. "They had a mess in the next room, and never came in here."

"Well, I'll have a pen'orth for luck," said I, and avoiding "Norma," and "Poet and Peasant," moved the pointer towards a chansonette, something about a good time coming. Such a monstrous wheezing and gurgling, such a deadening clang of cracked cymbals, such a Puck-like concatenation of flat notes and sudden thuds that told of broken strings! And so much of it for a ten-centime piece. When the tumult began a

third time I made off. No wonder the Germans only tried the instrument once!

By 8 P.M. we found ourselves in a sort of junction village, its two main roads alive with long lines of moving batteries and lorries and transport waggons. Inky blackness everywhere, for the Hun bombed the place nightly, and "No lights" was a standing order. Odd shouts and curses from drivers in difficulties with their steeds; the continuous cry of "Keep to the right!" from the military police; from a garden close by the howl of an abandoned dog; and from some dilapidated house Cockney voices harmonising: "It's a Long, Long Trail." There would be no moon that night, and a moaning wind was rising.

A halt had been called in front of our column, and there was talk of the batteries watering their horses before completing the further three miles to their roadside encampments. The Headquarters party had resigned themselves to a good hour's wait, when I heard the Adjutant's voice calling my name.

"Headquarters will go up to R—— to-night, and we shall mess with the General," he shouted at me from out of the darkness. "Traffic isn't supposed to go this way to the right; but you come with me, and we'll talk to the A.P. at the Corps Commandant's office. They ought to let our little lot through."

Headquarters mess-cart and G.S. waggon, Maltese cart and telephone waggon did indeed get through, and by 9.15 P.M. the horses were watered and fed, the men housed, and we ourselves were at dinner in the cottage that had become Divisional R.A. Headquarters.

A cheerful dinner with plenty of talk. It wasn't believed now that the Hun would attack next morning; but, in any case, we were going up to relieve a R.H.A. unit. The Brigade-Major was very comforting about the conveniences of our men's positions. Then some one carried the conversation away and beyond, and, quoting an "Ole Luk-Oie" story, submitted that the higher realms of Generalship should include the closer study of the personal history and characteristics — mental and moral—of enemy commanders. Some one else noted that the supposed speciality of the General immediately opposite us was that of making fierce attacks across impassable marshes. "Good," put in a third some one. "Let's puzzle the German Staff by persuading him that we have an Etonian General in this part of the line, a very celebrated 'wet-bob.'" Which sprightly suggestion made the Brigadier-General smile. But it was my good fortune to go one better. I had to partner him at bridge, and brought off a grand slam.

Next morning snow; and the Colonel, the Adjutant, and myself had a seven-miles' ride before us. The Germans had not attacked, but the general move up of fresh divisions was continuing, and our Brigade had

to take over the part of the line we were told off to defend by 5 P.M.

All the talk on the way up was of the beautiful quietude of the area we were riding through: no weed-choked houses with the windows all blown in; no sound of guns, no line of filled-up ambulances; few lorries on the main thoroughfares; only the khaki-clad road-repairers and the "Gas Alert" notice-boards to remind us we were in a British area. As we reached the quarry that was to become Brigade Headquarters, we marvelled still more. A veritable quarry *de luxe*. A mess fashioned out of stone-blocks hewn from the quarry, perfectly cut and perfectly laid. Six-inch girders to support the concrete roof, and an underground passage as a funk-hole from bombs, shells, and gas. Separate strong-room, bedrooms for the officers; and some one had had time to paint on the doors, "O.C., R.F.A. Brigade," "Adjutant," "Intelligence Officer, R.F.A.," and "Signal Officer, R.F.A.," with proper professional skill. Electric light laid on to all these quarters, and to the Brigade office and the signallers' underground chamber. Aladdin didn't enjoy a more gorgeous eye-opener on his first tour of his palace.

"Never seen such headquarters," grinned the Adjutant. "Wonder why there's no place for the Divisional Band."

I shall never forget the content of the next week. The way from Brigade H.Q., past the batteries and up to the front line, was over a wide rolling country of ploughed and fallow lands, of the first wild flowers, of budding hedgerows, of woods in which birds lilted their spring songs. The atmosphere was fresh and redolent of clean earth; odd shell-holes you came across were, miracle of miracles, grass-grown — a sight for eyes tired with the drab, stinking desolation of Flanders. A more than spring warmth quickened growing things. White tendrils of fluff floated strangely in the air, and spread thousands of soft, clinging threads over telephone-wires, tree-tops, and across miles of growing fields — the curious output of myriads of spinning-spiders. These were quaintly restful visits to the front line. The Boche was a mile away at least; and when you were weary of staring through binoculars, trying to spot one or two officers, you could sit and lounge, and hum the rag-time "Wait and See the Ducks go by," with a new and very thorough meaning. The signal officer was away on a course, and I took on his duties: plenty of long walks and a good deal of labelling to do, but the task was not onerous. "We've only had one wire down through shell-fire since we've been here," the signalling officer of the outgoing brigade had told me: and indeed, until March 21, the telephone-wires to batteries and "O.P.'s" remained as undisturbed as if they had skirted our Devonshire fields and lanes. The Colonel was quite happy,

spending two or three hours a day at O.P.'s, watching our guns register, or do a bit of sniping on the very, very rare occasions on which a Hun was spotted.

"I can see how the subalterns shoot on a big open front like this — and teach them something," he said. "This is an admirable part of the line for instruction purposes."

Whether the Boche would attack in force on our part of the front was argued upon and considered from every point of view. There were certain natural features that made such an attempt exceedingly improbable. Nevertheless infantry and artillery kept hard at it, strengthening our means of defence. One day I did a tour with the Machine-Gun Commander in order to get to know the exact whereabouts of the machine-gun posts. They were superlatively well hidden, and the Major-General himself had to laugh when one battalion commander, saying, "There's one just about here, sir," was startled by a corporal's voice near his very boot-toes calling out, "Yes, sir, it's here, sir." Gunners had the rare experience of circling their battery positions with barbed wire, and sighting machine-guns for hand-to-hand protection of the 18 prs. and 4·5 hows.; and special instruction in musketry and Lewis-gun manipulation was given by infantry instructors. There was memorable jubilation one morning at our Brigade Headquarters, when one of the orderlies, a Manchester man who fired with his left hand, and had the rifle-butt to his left shoulder, beat the infantry crack shot who came to instruct the H.Q. staff.

Camouflaging is now, of course, a studied science, and our Colonel, who issued special guiding notes to his batteries, had a very few sharp words to say one afternoon. The British soldier, old and new, is always happy when he is demolishing something; and a sergeant sent to prepare a pit for a forward gun had collected wood and corrugated iron for it by pulling to pieces a neighbouring dummy gun, placed specially to draw enemy fire. "Bad as some Pioneers I noticed yesterday," said the Colonel tersely. "They shifted a couple of trees to a place where there had been no trees at all before and thought that that was camouflage."

Happy, confident days! The Doctor, noting the almost summery heat that had set in talked of the mosquito headquarters that would develop in the pond near our quarry. "I'll oil that pond," he gave forth, and prepared accordingly. Each mail brought him additional copies of the 'Saturday Evening Post,' which he devoured every moment he was off duty.

I made the joyful discovery that the thick stone blocks kept the mess so dry and at such an even temperature that the hundred decent-quality cigars I had brought from England could be kept in condition as perfect as if they

were at the Stores. The Adjutant learnt that his new steed could indeed buck; but as the afternoon which saw him take a toss preceded the day on which he left for leave to England, he forgot to be furious, and went off promising to bring back all sorts of things for the mess.

Our companion infantry battalion were as gorgeously housed as ourselves in an adjoining quarry, and at the dinner parties arranged between their mess and ours reminiscences of Thiepval and Schwaben Redoubt, and July 1st 1917, and St Pierre Divion and the Hindenburg Line, brought out many a new and many an old story.

On the night of March 19th our chief guest was the youthful Lieutenant-Colonel who a very few weeks before had succeeded to the command of the ——. Tall, properly handsome, with his crisp curling hair and his chin that was firm but not markedly so; eyes that were reflective rather than compelling; earnest to the point of an absorbed seriousness—we did right to note him well. He was destined to win great glory in the vortex of flame and smoke and agony and panic into which we were to be swept within the next thirty-six hours. My chief recollection of him that night is of his careful attentiveness to everything said by our own Colonel on the science of present-day war the understanding deference paid by a splendid young leader to the knowledge, and grasp, and fine character of a very complete gunner.

II.

At 5.10 P.M. on March 20 I was in the mess, casting an appraising eye upon the coloured study of a girl in pink—dark-haired, hazel-eyed, *très soignée*, but not too sophisticated, one would say; her beauty of the kind that glows and tells of abundant vitality and a fresh happy mind. The little American doctor had sacrificed the cover of one of his beloved 'Saturday Evening Posts' for this portrait, and with extreme neatness had scissored it out and fastened it on the wall—a pleasant change from the cocaine and chocolate-box suggestiveness of the languorous Kirchner type that in 1916 and 1917 lent a pinchbeck Montmartre atmosphere to so many English messes in France and Flanders.

The day had been hot and peaceful, the only sound of gun-fire a six-inch how. registering, and, during a morning tour with the Second Lieutenant who had come from one of the batteries to act as temporary signalling officer, I remembered noting again a weather-beaten civilian boot and a decayed bowler hat that for weeks had lain neglected and undisturbed in one of the rough tracks leading to the front line—typical of the un-

changing restfulness of this part of the front.

Suddenly the door opened, to admit Colonel ——, C.O. of the Infantry Battalion who were our near neighbours in the quarry.

"Have you had the 'PREPARE FOR ATTACK?'" he asked abruptly as we held ourselves to attention.

"No, sir," I replied, and moved to the telephone to ring up Divisional Artillery Headquarters.

"Just come in," he said; and even as I asked exchange to put me through to "D.A.," the brigade clerk came in with the telephoned warning that we had talked about, expected, or refused to believe in ever since the alarm order to move into the line a fortnight before.

The formal intimation was sent by wire to the batteries, and I telephoned to find which battery the Colonel was visiting, and gave him the news which, according to our precise and well-thought-out scheme of defence, was a preliminary warning not intended to interfere with any work in hand.

Then the doctor and myself and the Divisional Artillery Gas Officer, who had called in while on an inspecting tour, settled down to tea, jam, and water-cress.

That night our dinner guest was the former captain of our 4·5 how. battery, now in command of a heavy battery that had come into action within a quarter of a mile of our H.Q. The "MAN BATTLE POSITIONS," the order succeeding "PREPARE FOR ATTACK" in the defence programme, was not expected that night, and we gossiped and talked war and new gunnery devices much as usual. No story goes so well at mess as the account of some fatuous muddle brought about by the administrative bewilderments that are apparently inevitable in the monster armies of to-day. This was one told with quiet relish by our guest that night:—

"You remember the —— show?" he said. "A lot of stores were, of course, lost in the scramble; and, soon after I found my present battery, I had to sit on an inquiry into the mysterious loss of six waggons belonging to a 60-pounder battery. Two courts of inquiry had already sat on the matter, and failed to trace the whereabouts of the waggons which had been reported in all sorts of places. At the third inquiry a witness stated that the last place the waggons were seen at before getting lost was such and such a place. A member of the court asked casually whether any one had since visited the spot; and as it was near lunch-time some one else suggested that the court adjourn while an officer motor-cycled over and made inquiries. And I'm hanged," concluded the teller of the story, "if the officer didn't come back and report that the waggons were still there, had been there all the time, and were in good condition and under a guard. Piles of official correspondence had been written over the

matter, and the investigation had drifted through all sorts of channels."

Midnight: I had sent out the night-firing orders to our four batteries, checked watches over the telephone, and put in a twenty minutes' wrestle with the brain-racking Army Form B. 213. The doctor and signalling officer had slipped away to bed, and the Colonel was writing his nightly letter home. I smoked a final cigarette and turned in at 12.30 A.M.

3.30 A.M.: The telephone bell above my head was tinkling. It was the Brigade-Major's voice that spoke. "Will you put your batteries on some extra bursts of fire between 3.45 and 4.10—viz., at places where the enemy, if they are going to attack, are likely to be forming up? Right!—that gives you a quarter of an hour to arrange with the batteries. Good night!"

My marked map with registered targets for the various batteries was by the bedside, and I was able, without getting up, to carry out the Brigade-Major's instructions. One battery was slow in answering, and as time began to press I complained with some force, when the captain—his battery commander was away on leave—at last got on the telephone. Poor Dawson. He was very apologetic. I never spoke to him again. He was a dead man within nine hours.

I suppose I had been asleep again about twenty minutes when a rolling boom, the scream of approaching shells, and regular cracking bursts to right and left, woke me up. Now and again one heard the swish and the "pop" of gas-shells. A hostile bombardment, without a doubt. I looked at my watch —4.33 A.M.

It was hours afterwards before I realised that this was the opening bombardment of perhaps the mightiest, most overpowering assault in military history. Had not the "PREPARE FOR ATTACK" warning come in I should have been in pyjamas, and might possibly have lain in bed for two or three minutes, listening quietly and comfortably while estimating the extent and intensity of the barrage. But this occasion was different, and I was up and about a couple of minutes after waking. Opening my door, I encountered the not unpleasant smell of lachrymatory gas. The Infantry Battalion headquarters' staff were already moving out of the quarry to their forward station. By 4.40 A.M. our Colonel had talked over the telephone with two of the battery commanders. Their reports were quite optimistic. "B Battery were wise in shifting from their old position three days ago," he remarked cheerfully. "The old position is getting a lot of shelling; there's nothing falling where they are now. Lots of gas-shelling apparently. It's lucky the batteries had that daily drill serving the guns with gas-masks on."

The doctor and the acting

signal officer came into the mess from their quarters farther along the quarry. "If this gas-shelling goes on, I guess we shall all have to have lessons in the deaf-and-dumb talk," puffed the doctor, pulling off his gas-helmet. "Keep that door closed!"

"C Battery's line gone, sir," rang up the sergeant-signaller. "M'Quillan and Black have gone out on it."

"Keep Corporal Mann and Sapper Winter on the telephone board to-day," I advised Bliss, the youngster who had come to headquarters the day before to do signal officer. "The Colonel will be doing a lot of telephoning, and they know his methods. Be sure to keep all the Scotsmen off the board. The Colonel says Scotsmen ought never to be allowed to be telephonists. Impossible to understand what they say."

By 5 A.M. one of the two officers who over-night had manned the forward O.P.'s had spoken to us. He was 2000 yards in front of the most forward battery, but a still small voice sounded confident and cheery, "A few shells have dropped to the right of the O.P., but there's no sign of any infantry attack," was his message. We heard nothing more of him until six weeks afterwards, when his uncle wrote and told the Colonel he was safe, but a prisoner in Germany.

5.15 A.M.: The cook was handing round early morning tea. C Battery were through again, and we learned that a sergeant had been killed and one gunner wounded by a 4·2 that had pitched on the edge of the gun-pit. Two other batteries were cut off from headquarters; however, we gathered from the battery connected by the buried cable—that a week before had kept 500 men busy digging for three days—that, as far as they could see, all our batteries were shooting merrily and according to programme.

By 6 A.M. the Brigadier-General, C.R.A., had told the Colonel that the situation to left and right was the same as on our immediate front: enemy bombardment very heavy and continuing, but no infantry attack. "We'll shave and have breakfast," the Colonel said. "Looks as if the actual attack must be farther north."

By 8 A.M. the shelling had died down. It was going to be a lovely spring day, but there was a curiously heavy, clinging mist. "Want to be careful of the gas shell-holes when the sun warms up," said the doctor.

Fresh ammunition was coming up from the waggon lines, and our guns continued to fire on arranged targets. The only additional casualty was that of an officer of B Battery, who had had a piece of his ear chipped off by a splinter, and had gone off to a dressing station. The news from A Battery aroused much more interest. An 8-inch shell had landed right on top of their dug-out mess. No one was inside at the time, but three officers, who were wont to sleep there, had had every article of kit

destroyed. One subaltern who, in spite of the PREPARE FOR ATTACK notification, had put on pyjamas, was left with exactly what he stood up in—viz., pyjamas, British warm, and gum-boots.

11 A.M.: The Colonel had spoken more than once about the latest situation to the Brigade-Major of the Infantry Brigade we were covering, and to our own Brigade-Major. The staff captain had rung me up about the return of dirty underclothing of men visiting the Divisional Baths; there was a Base Paymaster's query regarding the Imprest Account which I had answered; a batch of Corps and Divisional routine orders had come in, notifying the next visits of the Field Cashier, emphasising the need for saving dripping, and demanding information as to the alleged damage done to the bark of certain trees by our more frolicsome horse. Another official envelope I opened showed that Records were worrying whether a particular regimental sergeant-major was an acting or a temporary sergeant-major.

The doctor and the signalling officer had gone forward to visit the batteries. Hostile shelling seemed to have died out. The mist was denser than ever—a weather phenomenon that continued to puzzle.

The telephone bell tinkled again; the Colonel turned from the big map-board on the wall and took up the receiver. "Col. —— speaking! — Yes! —Have they?—Sorry to hear that!—Umph!—No! no signs of an attack on our front. Let me know any further developments—Good-bye!"

He looked towards me and said briefly, "The Boche infantry have got over on our left! Came through the mist! I'm afraid the —— road (our companion Field Artillery Brigade) have caught it badly. Two of their batteries have lost all their guns. Get me the Brigade-Major of the —— Brigade"—turning to the telephone again.

He told the Brigade-Major of the Infantry we were covering the news of the break on the left. No, our infantry had not yet been attacked; but up in the front it was difficult to see anything in the mist.

The Colonel studied his wall-map with intentness, and put a forefinger on the —— road Brigade gun positions. "If he's through there we can expect him in —— (naming a village of great strategical importance) in a couple of hours."

A runner came in from D Battery, with whom we had had no communication for nearly two hours. The Huns seemed to know their position, and had put over a regular fusilade of 4·2's and 5·9's and gas-shells. The duck-board running outside the dug-outs behind the guns had had six direct hits, and two of the dug-outs were blown in, also No. 2 gun had had its off-wheel smashed by a splinter; two men rather badly wounded.

For an hour there was no further news, and, assisted by my two clerks, I proceeded

peacefully with the ordinary routine work of the Adjutant's department. The doctor came back and said that B Battery were all right, but could not get communication with their F.O.O., not even by lamp. The 8-inch shell had made very short work of A Battery's mess. "Poor old Drake," went on the doctor, "he'd got a new pair of cavalry twill breeches, cost him £5, 10s., and he'd never even worn them. They came by parcel yesterday, and the fools at the waggon line sent them up last night." Bliss, he added, had stayed with A Battery, and was trying to get the line through between A and B, so that Headquarters could speak to A.

I strolled over to the other side of the quarry where the Colonel's, the doctor's, and my horses were under cover, and found they had not been troubled by the gas. The men were at dinner; we were to lunch at 1.15 P.M.

12.40 P.M.: The Colonel was again speaking to the Infantry Brigade-Major. Still no signs of the German infantry in our front line.

Then in one swift moment the whole situation changed. A sweating, staggering gunner blundered into the doorway. He made no pretence at saluting, but called out with all his strength: "The Boche is through."

"Who is that man?" demanded the Colonel, whipping round like lightning, and frowning. "Bring him here! Who do you belong to?"

The man had calmed; but before he could reply there was another interruption. A strained voice outside shouted, "Is the Colonel there? Is the Adjutant there?" Hurrying through the doorway, I saw a tall, perspiring, hatless young subaltern, cursing because he had got entangled in the guy-ropes of some camouflage netting posts. It was Hetherton of D Battery.

The Colonel came outside. "The Huns came on us in the mist, sir," panted Hetherton, "out of the wood. They've killed Dawson, sir." His voice broke — "and some of the others. There were only four of us got away. I came on to tell you." He stopped and breathed hard.

The Colonel looked stern, but his voice was smooth and collected. "That's all right," he said, almost soothingly. "You cut off with your party and report to the retiring position."

The young man looked dazed, but saluted, and was moving off, when the Colonel caught him by the arm. "Come and have a drink, Hetherton, before going on," he said; "it'll do you good."

"No, thank you, sir," replied Hetherton, and this time he saluted with body as erect and arm as taut as if on parade. In another second he had vanished.

There was tense silence as the Colonel seized the telephone.

"Put me through to A Battery," he said. Turning towards me, he added: "Turn

out all the men not on telephone duty to take post on the top of the quarry."

I slipped out and passed the order to the sergeant in charge of the signallers, roused up the servants, and saw that each man had his rifle.

"Now, Duncombe," I said to the left-handed orderly who had beaten the Infantry crack shot a few days before, "you may have a chance to see if your eye is in to-day."

When I got back to the mess, I learned that the Infantry had news that the Boche was coming over the crest towards our battle positions. The major commanding A Battery had told the Colonel that his battery and B had the enemy in full view, and were firing with open sights. "We are killing hundreds of 'em, sir," he had reported with delightful insouciance.

One sharp outburst from the Colonel. As he came outside to see if our twenty-odd men were placed in the best positions for defending the quarry, he looked across and noted that the officers' chargers were saddled up, and that the grooms were leading them on to the road above.

"Stop those horses!" he called out angrily. "Who gave orders for them to leave? Have my horses unsaddled at once. There's always some damn fellow who does a stupid thing like that and puts the wind up people."

The situation was really saved by the Adjutant's new charger, which, startled by an overcoat the groom had flung over him, began the best exhibition of bucking he had given since he joined us. As he was in the lead, and access to the road was by a narrow closed-in track, no one could get by him.

The grooms in a shamefaced way protested that some one had passed the "Saddle-up" order, and had a few hectic, stinging words addressed to them. Apparently a mounted orderly, galloping past with a message, had shouted out something about the enemy being close behind.

The incident being closed, the Colonel and myself strapped on belts and revolvers. The Colonel glanced swiftly at the map position of the battery that the approaching Huns had scuppered, and then said quickly—

"Whatever happens, we shall have time for something to eat. Tell Manning to bring in lunch."

III.

We none of us exactly enjoyed that lunch. It was a nice lunch, too: the steak cut thin, like steak *à la minute*, and not overdone, with crisp onion sprigs—"bristled onions" the cook always called them; and, wonder of wonders, a pudding made by cribbing our bread

allowance, with plum jam and a few strips of macaroni to spice it up. But the thought that the Boche had scuppered D Battery not a thousand yards away, and was coming on, did *not* improve the appetite. And news of what was really happening was so scant and so indefinite! The Colonel commented once on the tenderness of the steak, and then looked thoughtful; the doctor remained dumb; for myself, I felt keyed up to the state that seems to clear the mind and to make one doubly alert in execution, but my hand did perhaps shake a trifle, and I drank two whiskies instead of my usual one. I thought of one or two things I ought to have done and had left undone. I remember feeling distinctly annoyed because a particular hair lotion on its way from England might not be delivered. I made sure that a certain discoloured Edward and Alexandra Coronation medal—given me for luck—was secure in my pocket-book, and stuffed my breast-pockets with all the cigars they would hold.

Lunch was finished in about eight minutes, and the imperturbable Manning cleared away.

"What about these Defence File papers and the maps on the wall, sir?" I asked the Colonel, my mind harking back to newspaper accounts of German strategic documents captured by us in some of our advances.

"Tear them up and put them on the fire. We won't destroy this map"—pointing to a neat and graphic piece of coloured draughtsmanship showing infantry and artillery dispositions—"until we have to."

I got to work, and the fire crackled joyously. "Don't say we shall have to leave these to the Hun, doctor!" I said in shocked tones, picking up four copies of his adored 'Saturday Evening Post.'

The doctor smiled vaguely, but answered nothing.

Hostile shelling had ceased in our neighbourhood. The sound our ears waited for was the "putt—puttr—putt" of machine-guns, always the indication of a near infantry attack. I went out and made sure that the look-outs at both ends of the quarry were doing their work, and found our little Headquarters army, twenty-five men all told, quick and steady, and ready for the moment, should it come.

Half an hour slipped by. We spoke on the telephone to C Battery, who were on high ground. No, they could see no wave of German infantry approaching; but Bullivant, A Battery's major, who for the time being was commanding D Battery's rear uncaptured guns as well as his own rear and forward 18-pounders, said Huns were coming up *en masse* from the south-west. "My guns are firing at them, and B's forward guns are shooting as well," he went on. "No! I have seen nothing of our infantry, but observation is still bad; packets of mist still about. About Bliss" (the

signalling officer who had gone out in the morning and not returned). "Oh! he stayed some time at our forward position and then said he was going to get over to B Battery to see why they were cut off from communication. A lot of 4·2's were coming over at the time, and there were snipers about. He had to duck three or four times on the way and then disappear from view."

Dumble, captain of B Battery, who had come up from the waggon line, dropped in and hurried off, saying he was going forward to see if he could get anywhere near the Battery.

3 P.M.: No further developments. "I'm going over to see General ——," announced the Colonel, naming the Brigadier-General commanding the Infantry Brigade we were covering.

Five minutes later the adjutant of an infantry battalion on our left rang through and told me that large numbers of Germans were over the crest and advancing towards what the map showed me was our B Battery's forward positions. I put B Battery's rear position guns to fire on them by the map, and guessed that the Battery's forward guns would be hard at it already.

The Colonel came back from the Infantry Brigade, quiet and self-possessed as ever. "Defence in depth means forces more scattered, and greater difficulty in keeping up communication," he remarked, taking a chair and lighting a cigarette. "As far as can be gathered, the situation is this: The Boche got through in force on our left and the —th Division gave way. That bared our own Division's left flank, and is the reason why the —rd Brigade had such a bad time and lost so many guns. The enemy is still coming on; and he's doing too well, also against the —th Division on our right. Our own people say he has worked past their outposts, but that so far as is known they are holding out. The main battle positions are still safe, and a counter-attack is being arranged. The orders are to hold the line until dark, and then fall back over the canal. No news at all of what is happening farther north!" This was the longest speech the Colonel made on that 21st of March.

4 P.M.: I telephoned to the Regimental Sergeant-Major and told him to come up with the mess cart and the G.S. waggon for remaining kit, and ordered the servants to pack up. Twenty minutes later Dumble returned, dusty and dispirited.

"Well, Dumble, what news?" inquired the Colonel quickly.

"I couldn't get to the Battery, sir—the enemy are round it, between it and our infantry," began Dumble in cut-up tones.

"The nearest I got was in a trench held by the 7th Westshires. An officer told me that an advanced party of the enemy came over the crest about 12.30. They fired Very lights in response to a Hun contact plane that flew towards the switch-

trench leading N.E. towards the battery. By 2 o'clock more enemy infantry were coming from the south, apparently to join up with the advanced party who had sat tight. Both A and B Batteries fired on this new body, and they seemed to me dispersed. But by half-past three, while I was there, Germans in small parties were crawling through the wire in front of B Battery, and getting into our trenches."

He paused and wiped his streaming face with his handkerchief.

"What were our infantry doing?" the Colonel interrogated.

"There were only small parties of them, sir, and very scattered," went on Dumble. "The officer and myself, with a dozen men, got along a trench to within thirty yards of some Huns and fired on them. But another party, from almost behind us, came along and bombed us back. We had two killed and brought one wounded man back with us. Another lot came up on our left and we had to move farther back."

"Was the battery still firing when you came away?" demanded the Colonel.

"Yes, sir, firing well, but mostly on fresh parties of Boche eight hundred yards away."

A knock at the door and the entrance of a quick-eyed, dapper bombardier from the very battery talked of prevented Dumble continuing.

"From Major Harville, sir," he said, saluting.

Just a slip from an Army Book 136, in Harville's neat, cramped handwriting. And the message itself was formal enough: a plain, bald statement of a situation that contained heroism, drama, a fight against odds—despair, probably, were the truth known; but despair crowned with the halo of glory and self-sacrifice. The message ran—

"I have fired 2200 rounds, and have only 200 rounds left. My S.A.A. for Lewis guns and rifles is also running short. Can more ammunition be sent up immediately, please?

"The enemy has got through the wire in front of the battery, and is now on two sides of us. If the infantry can assist we can hold out until dark, when I will retire to rear position."

The note was timed 3.40 P.M. It was now 4.30 P.M.

The Colonel was never more collected or more rapid in acting than at this moment. In two minutes he had spoken to the Infantry Brigadier, and asked whether immediate assistance could not be sent. Then he wrote this note to Major Harville—

"Your message timed 3.40 P.M. received at 4.30 P.M.

"Hold on: you are doing splendidly, and counter-attacks are being organised.

"Teams with limbers to withdraw your guns to rear position by 8 P.M. are being sent for."

"I hope the counter-attack is in time," he said to me with a certain sad thoughtfulness

before handing the note to the Bombardier. "Do you think you can get back to the battery, Bombardier?" he added. "I'm afraid you'll find more Boche there now."

"Ill try, sir," replied the Bombardier stoutly.

"Off you go then, but be careful!"

In the period of waiting that followed we seemed to have forgotten that three hours ago we were expecting every minute to have to turn out and face the Boche with rifle and revolver. Save for the Colonel and two or three of the signallers and a couple of servants, none of us were experienced soldiers; all our previous experience had been in attack; it was something new this feeling that a powerful, energetic, determined foe was beating down our opposition and getting nearer and nearer. Yet, whatever they may have felt, not one of our little band showed signs of depression or nervous excitement. The signalling-sergeant was cursing the sanitary orderly for not having cleared up a particular litter of tins and empty cigarette packets; the officers' cook was peeling potatoes for dinner, and I heard the old wheeler singing softly to himself some stupid, old-time, music-hall ditty.

In the mess no one spoke a word, but each of us knew that our one thought was whether B Battery would be able to hold out.

5.30 P.M.: The answer, a grim and saddening one. A sergeant came hurrying in.

"They've captured the battery, sir," he said bluntly, "and Major Harville is killed. I came to report, sir. I was the only one to get away."

I think sometimes of famous cases of tragedy and passion I have heard unfolded at the Old Bailey and the Law Courts, and the intense, almost theatrical atmosphere surrounding them, and compare it to the simple setting of this story, told in matter-of-fact tones by a sergeant standing to attention. "We finished all our ammunition, sir," he began, addressing the Colonel, "and took our rifles. Major Harville was shot by a machine-gun while he was detailing us to defend the two gun-pits farthest from the place where the enemy had got past our wire. He fell into my gun-pit, sir, shot in the head. Mr Dawes, who took command, said we would keep on with rifles, and Bombardier Clidstone was doing fine work with his Lewis gun. The Huns didn't seem inclined to come close, and after a conference in my gun-pit with Mr Bliss, Mr Dawes asked for a volunteer to try and find the nearest infantry, and to tell them we'd hold on if they could engage the enemy and prevent him rushing us. I said I would try, and crawled on my belly, sir, through the grass to an empty trench. The battery fired several fine volleys; I heard them for a long time. It was slow work crawling away without being seen, and when I had got 600 yards and was trying to get my bearing

—I don't know what time it was.

"Then I noticed that no firing came from the battery. There was no sound at all for over ten minutes. Then about a hundred Germans rushed forward and started bombing the gun-pits, and some of our men came up. I saw about a dozen of them marched off as prisoners."

"You are quite sure Major Harville was killed?" asked the Colonel quietly.

"Yes, sir; he fell right in my gun-pit."

We all stood silent, looking on the ground. Poor Harville! The phrase that kept running in my mind was, "One of the best," but with a different meaning to that in which generally it is used. A gallant upright soul. The very best type of the civilian soldier who is fighting this war for England. Before the war a professional man who had given no thought to fighting: when he became a soldier it was because he understood thoroughly, and believed in completely, all that for which he was ready to give his life.

A clean-living, truly religious man, too, who loathed loose talk and swearing, and lived up to his ideals even amid the slime and filth of war. And his bravery was that of the honest man who fears and yet faces danger, not the bull-headed heroism of the "man who knows no fear." Poor Harville!

The sergeant spoke again.

"Before I came back here, sir, after the enemy had marched off our men, A Battery turned their guns on the Germans in B Battery's position."

"Did they?" said the Colonel, his face lighting up. "Splendid!"

"Yes, sir; they fired well, a hundred rounds, I should think. They scattered all the Germans, sir; they ran like mad."

We had given up hope of ever hearing again of the two sniping guns sited just behind the original front line, D.'s 18-pdr. and C.'s 4·5 how. They were at least 2000 yards in front of the ill-fated B Battery, and must have been captured. What was our surprise then to note the arrival, at a slow easy walk, of the sergeant of C Battery who had been in charge of the 4·5 howitzer. He reported that the detachments had come away safely at 5.45 P.M., and before doing so had "spiked" both guns, and so left their enemy useless booty. It was such an orderly account of action, taken strictly according to drill-book procedure, that I have pieced it together in this form:—

2.30 A.M. A few shells falling.
4.30 A.M. Intense hostile bombardment begun. Officer at O.P. ordered detachments to man guns.
4.32 A.M. Fired on two targets on orders from O.P.
Noon. Communication with O.P. broke down.
12.30 P.M. Attempt to mend O.P. wire failed, as it was too badly cut by shell fire.

1 P.M. The sergeant of C Battery went away to try and discover the situation and to obtain orders.

2 P.M. The sergeant found the men in neighbourhood of O.P. Officer obviously killed or a prisoner. Enemy troops also along road leading to battery positions where officers could be found. Returned to "sniping" howitzer.

4.30 P.M. The sergeant then endeavoured to get in touch with the infantry, and to obtain orders from them. He found none of our own infantry, but a machine-gun officer directed him to hold on as long as he could. He returned again, and discovering Germans close to the 18-pdr. and the 4·5 howitzer, ordered the detachments to open fire on them with rifles. The enemy were dispersed after ten minutes' shooting.

5.45 P.M. The two detachments came away, first blowing up the 4·5 how. and removing the breech mechanism, dial sight, and synchrometer of the 18-pdr. As soon as he had vacated the position the sergeant reported to the machine-gun officer and then to his battery's rear position.

"That's the way to carry on war," exclaimed the Colonel when the sergeant had saluted and departed: "A stout fellow that!"

The reports from Divisional Artillery and from the Infantry Brigade with whom we were in liaison showed that the Hun was still coming on to the left and the right of us. Directly in front of us he seemed quiescent, but the orders to get over the canal after nightfall held good. The Colonel dictated orders for the batteries to me, and then said—

"I want you to get a telephone line out from here over the canal. The batteries will come into action behind the railway embankment." He indicated the positions on the map. "I'm going to keep an officer at A Battery's rear O.P. until the last moment, and the line must run from him to here and thence over the canal to the batteries in their new positions. You quite understand? I shall stay with General —— (the Infantry Brigadier) and cross the canal with him. Leave me one telephonist. We'll have dinner and get the kit and the mess cart back to the waggon lines; and you'd better get your line out immediately after dinner."

These orders were clear enough. We dined comfortably, and by 8 P.M. all the waggons, save the mess cart, were ready to move out of the quarry.

As I stepped out of the mess to see that arrangements were complete the Regimental Sergeant-Major approached me, saying: "They say the strong point at —— (about 600 yards away) has fallen, sir. We're quite ready to move, sir!"

A voice behind me, the Colonel's: "Put a stop at once to such a ridiculous, panicky rumour. The next man who repeats it is to be put under arrest."

Nevertheless, when the telephone bell rang and I went inside the mess to answer it, the Infantry Brigade-Major's high-pitched voice said in quick sharp tones: "The strong point has just been carried by the enemy. You'd better be clearing out of your quarry."

IV.

Something that aroused anger, recrimination, and some amusement occurred during our night evacuation of the quarry. Officers' and men's kit, signalling outfit, the doctor's medical stores, and the cook's stove and kitchen utensils had been packed. The sergeant-major had a final hunt round, and then gave the order "Walk march!" The G.S. waggon, drawn by six D.A.C. mules, set off at regulation pace, the mess-cart drawn by Minnie, the fat roan, followed with due sedateness; and then, hang me! if the pole of the Maltese cart didn't snap in two. Old-soldier resource and much hard swearing failed to make it a workable vehicle. Worse still, it was this cart that contained the officers' kit, including the Colonel's. It was pitch-dark, and the advancing enemy not more than a thousand yards away.

I wasn't there at that exact moment, but I believe the sergeant-major blamed the size of our "on leave" Adjutant's spare kit for the breakdown. "A valise and a half, two bags and a portmanteau—enough for three people," he growled. An attempt was made to get our kit away by adding to the load on the G.S. waggon, but that made it altogether too top-heavy; and after ten minutes of sweating and shouting the sergeant-major told the drivers to move off, leaving the wrecked Maltese cart and the officers' kit behind. That was how I found it—on the ground—when, having received final instructions from the Colonel for linking up the batteries by telephone as soon as they took up new positions on the other side of the canal, I came out of the mess. The Colonel's servant stood by, looking angrily at the abandoned kit; and the sergeant-major, now on his horse, was saying he would try to borrow a cart from one of the batteries and get the stuff over the canal at any rate.

"Get away as soon as you can," I interrupted, "and bring back the first cart you unload at the waggon lines. You've got to get the Maltese cart away as well. Two of the servants will stay behind to help load up when you return. And look sharp if you don't want the Boche to be here first."

A squadron of Yeomanry, with picks and shovels, were lining up in front of the quarry as I came away with three of the signallers. It was extremely dark, there was a dampness in the air that sug-

gested rain, some Boche howitzers were firing over our heads across the canal, and a steady "putt-puttr-putt-putt" in the direction of the strong point, that less than half an hour ago had fallen, told of a machine-gun duel in progress. It was not an inspirating moment; and over us, like a pall, lay an atmosphere of doubt and apprehension that lack of knowledge of what was really happening only added to.

But at such moments there's nothing so steadying to mind and senses as something definite to do. Earlier on I had noted on a Corps signalling-map a test-box between the quarry and the canal and another one along the railway embankment, not far from the retiring positions assigned to the batteries. If we could find them the labour of laying an overland telephone wire from the quarry to the opposite side of the canal would be saved. We set out, got off the roadway, and did a good deal of floundering about in hedge-bottoms and over waste lands; but the important thing was that we found both test-boxes, and that the buried cables we hoped for were there.

10.30 P.M.: I had reeled out my lines alongside the railway from the test-box to C Battery and to D and B, who, because of the nine guns the brigade had lost in the morning, had become a composite battery. They had crossed the canal in comparative quiet and were now laying out lines of five by compass bearings. B Battery were coming along to a spot near the railway farther north, and my signallers were waiting to connect them up. Things were indeed getting ship-shape again. I had spoken through to the Colonel and put him in touch with his battery commanders, and to the F.O.O. left at the rearmost O.P. on the eastern side of the canal. The Colonel had issued a night firing programme just as if we were in settled positions, and with fresh ammunition arriving from the original waggon lines, the batteries began "pooping off" with brisk enthusiasm, their object being, of course, to cover the retirement of our infantry.

Every one of us had turned out that morning immediately the Hun bombardment started. No sleep could be looked for that night either; but there was the morrow, March 22nd, to be reckoned with—it might entail even more wear and tear than the day which was ending; so I sent back to the waggon lines all but six of the signallers, the brigade clerks, the two wireless operators, who had nothing whatever to do, and most of the servants, telling them to get as much sleep as possible. The Colonel's servant was still in the quarry, guarding our castaway kit; my own servant I had stationed on the canal bridge so that he could report to me as soon as the sergeant-major and the rescuing waggon hove in sight.

Our discovery of the buried cable running under the canal had a sequel equally welcome. One of the telephone linemen said he believed there was another "bury" on the far

side of the railway cutting, and that it connected with the back areas. The signalling-sergeant and myself set out on another hunt, and, joy! we discovered, after patient test calls with a D.III. telephone, that by speaking through two exchanges we could communicate with our own Divisional H.Q. It was six hundred yards from the railway cutting, but I could now keep in touch with the Colonel in front, the batteries to right and left of me along the railway, and the Brigadier-General and the Brigade-Major in rear.

1 A.M.: My work for the moment was complete and I could take it easy. I stood outside the test-box that had become a sort of Brigade H.Q. and listened to the waspish crack of our 18-pdrs. sending defiance to the enemy. The six signallers—plus a terrier—had crowded into the tiny sandbag shelter that protected the test-box. One of them, receiver to ear, waited for calls, a candle stuck on an inverted mess-tin shedding sufficient light for the pencilling of messages. The others sprawled in cramped positions, snuggled one against another for warmth, and sought sleep. The doings of the Boche seemed more puzzling than ever. What was happening on the other side of the canal? Five hours ago he had captured a strong post within 1800 yards of the spot on which I now stood, and we had no reserve lines of infantry in front of him. Why this strange quiescence? And then my mind took another turn. What had become of the sergeant-major with the waggon that was to gather up our left kit? Why did he take such a long time? I thought bitterly of my field boots, and the British warm I was beginning to want, and the new jacket and breeches, all in my valise. Why hadn't I put on my best pair of leggings to come away in? The Boche would have been welcome to the older ones I was wearing; besides, they didn't fit so well as the pair left in the quarry.

The little American doctor suddenly nipped my elbow. I had missed him during the last two hours. "Say, son," he said, "come and take a walk along the line: I've happened on a hut down along there with a fire in it. Belongs to some sappers. Come and take a warm."

"Can't," I replied, shaking my head; "I'd like to, but I shall have to be like the Boy who stood on the Burning Deck to-night. I must stop on this spot until the Colonel comes across."

The doctor toddled off, and I got the telephonist to ring through to the Colonel. "The enemy seems to be waiting. He's not troubling our infantry," he informed me, and then added, "Has the kit been got away from the quarry yet?"

I made sure that the telephonist was ringing up each battery every ten minutes to see that the lines were in working order, and then climbed up the railway bank and walked

over to inquire if the Brigade-Major had any news. He hadn't. "And try and keep in touch with us on this line," he added. "It's the only way we have at the moment of speaking to your Brigade."

2 A.M.: The best news of the night. The sergeant-major had crossed the bridge. Our precious kit would be borne to safety! At 3.15 A.M. he passed again, triumphant, the Maltese cart in tow as well. Hurrah! Let the war now proceed!

At 4.30 the Colonel telephoned that the Infantry Brigadier and himself were about to cross the canal. The telephone wire could be cut, and I was to meet him at the railway bridge in twenty minutes' time.

"The infantry are crossing the canal at six o'clock," he said when he rode up and called my name through the mist! "Batteries will start to withdraw to their next positions at 6.30. Each battery will withdraw a section (two guns) at a time; and the last section must not pull out until the preceding section is in action at the new position." He gave me the map co-ordinates of the new positions, and rode off to visit the battery commanders.

6 A.M.: Extraordinary, it was to be another rainless, hazy morning. How the weather always assists the Boche! In the grey gloom on top of the embankment I could see forms moving — our own infantry, marching steadily, neither cheerful nor depressed, just moving, impersonal forms. "What's happened?" I asked a subaltern, keeping time with him as he marched.

"We're going back to —— Wood," he answered. "The Westshires are lining up now behind the canal."

"Are they going to hold it?" I asked.

"Don't know," was the reply; "only know our orders."

"Had many casualties?" I asked again.

"No! only a few poor snipers. We weren't in the counter-attack."

They swung round and passed over the railway bridge, making west. On the bridge stood a keen-eyed, small-featured sapper major. I talked to him.

"No!" he informed me, "there's no intention of making a stand here. We've blown up all the canal bridges except one." A muffled boom! "Ah, there goes the last one. All our infantry are over by now."

A few German 4·2's were coming over now, mostly on the western side of the railway cutting. They helped to put a bit of ginger into the withdrawal of the guns. A section of each battery had now pulled out; the teams "walked out," crossing the bridge and heading down the road. There was no trotting. The batteries went out heads high.

7 A.M.: On the telephone I learned that the last two sections were waiting the arrival of mounted orderlies to tell them to pull out. Right!

I disconnected the wires, told the signallers to report to B Battery, where I would pick them up, and not to waste time getting there. Then I sought a copse on the other side of the bridge, where I knew my horses would be waiting.

The sentry and the sappers who waited to blow up the bridge remained at their posts silent and still. Forty yards after passing them I was alone. I stopped in the road and turned to look back. The sun was breaking through the mist, but it was a mournful landscape—dull, soulless. All at once I felt chilled and tired, and for the first time my thoughts turned seriously and intently towards what the newly-arrived day had in store for myself, for the Brigade, for England.

From the other side of the canal the "putt-puttr-putt" of machine-guns! I turned westwards and went in search of my horses.

V.

Not even on this twenty-second of March did we realise fully the vast conception and the extent of the German swoop, and that our brigade was as jetsam and as flotsam carried along on the mightiest part of the storm flood.

7.30 A.M.: The last sections of our batteries to pull out from behind the railway embankment passed me on the road, the horses walking grandly, the men tired but in high enough spirits. The enemy long-range guns were waking up now and playing a damnable tattoo on the main routes leading west. I saw one limber-waggon belonging to the Engineers blown sky-high, and three maimed horses had to be shot.

At the cross-roads east of the wood behind which the batteries were retiring I came upon the Colonel, his overcoat buttoned up, his face pallid with sleeplessness; but his mood was one for over-riding difficulties. He rode beside me awhile, and then pulled up, exclaiming, "Let's have a cup of tea to start the day with. Laneridge"—to his groom—"bring my Thermos flask."

"The first thing for you to do," he went on, as we drank tea and munched ration biscuits, a few of which wise folk always slip into their pockets when things are a-doing out here, "is to get wires out to the batteries again. Headquarters will be at ——. Division have gone back to where —— Corps were yesterday, and we take over their quarters."

"What's the view of things at Infantry Headquarters, sir?" I asked as we mounted again.

"Well, they blame the mist for the enemy getting past the outposts. Most of the machine-guns they camouflaged with so much trouble never came into the picture. But for some reason or other the Boche didn't follow up. Perhaps he

was waiting for reserves, or perhaps he got suspicious. Our infantry didn't suffer many casualties, and I'm sure the enemy didn't. We retired according to schedule time, and things were quite quiet when I crossed the canal at four o'clock this morning.

"Extraordinary attitude of mind some of the men out here nowadays have," he proceeded. "Last night they brought in one of the ——'s, who was captured by the Boche in the morning but escaped and got back to the battalion. He said that the enemy set prisoners bringing ammunition up to their front line. When he was asked how he escaped, he said that a shell killed 'the man-in-charge' of the party and he got away. 'The man-in-charge,'" repeated the Colonel with scorn. "He spoke as if the Boche N.C.O. were a sort of foreman, and as if bringing up ammunition which was to be shot at your own countrymen was the most ordinary thing in the world—Bah!"

Two high-velocity shells whizzed above our heads, and the Colonel's mare plunged excitedly. The enemy were evidently "stoking up" for a fresh effort. We trotted on and toured the batteries, the Colonel inspecting the O.P.'s from which our fire was to be directed, and ascertaining whether there was difficulty in keeping ammunition supply up to 300 rounds per gun. When we reached the Brigade Headquarters horse lines, I instructed the sergeant-major to turn out the telephone waggon in readiness to lay lines to the new battery positions. Then breakfast—steaming tea and sizzling fried eggs and bacon cooked to the minute. Nothing like being out all night for galvanising the breakfast appetite. And no time for lingering afterwards. A canter along the roadside to catch up the telephone cart; then, while the signalling-sergeant, a good fellow who could read a map, reeled out lines through the wood to the batteries, I undertook a tussle with the terminal boards in the huge and elaborate dug-out telephone exchange, that up to 5 A.M. had been the chief exchange of the whole Division. Now that Divisional Headquarters had been established where Corps Headquarters had been the day before, four miles back, there had to be a re-allotment of lines to Infantry, Artillery, Engineers, A.S.C., and the other units that work out the will of the Divisional Commander.

"I'll get young Bushman down from A Battery to do signalling-officer to-morrow. It will be difficult for you to do Adjutant and signalling-officer as well," remarked the Colonel two hours later, as he bent over his maps.

3 P.M.: A R.H.A. brigade had put in a claim for the quarters destined for us. Three days ago this would have resulted in polite recrimination and telephoned appeals to higher authorities, but to-day, such is the effect of mobile warfare, we all managed to dig in somehow. A decent

hut for the Colonel had been found, and there was a room in a bomb-mauled cottage where the doctor, "Swiff," the veterinary officer, and myself hoped to spread our camp-beds. We had shaved, and washed, and lunched, and looked and felt respectable again. The C.R.A. and the Brigade-Major had called and gone off with the Colonel to see the batteries shoot. I had forwarded by despatch-rider the Brigade return of casualties to the Staff Captain, so that reinforcements might be applied for forthwith. A French pointer of confiding disposition, who came into the mess from nowhere in particular, seemed quite to have made up his mind that we were come to stay.

The telephone bell! The Brigade-Major of our companion Infantry Brigade, with the latest news! "He's not crossed the canal on our front yet, and your guns are doing good work keeping him back. But he's got farther forward than we expected north of us. It's from the south that we want more news. There's a report that we have been pushed out of X——. That's very bad, if true."

A quarter of an hour later he rang up again. "There's a report that enemy infantry are massing in Z 23 d 5.8. Can you turn your guns on to 'em?" I looked at the map co-ordinates he had given, and rang through to the batteries.

4.30 P.M.: Pretty definite signs now that the enemy was coming on. A 5·9 had made a hole a hundred yards from where Headquarter horse lines had been staked out. Another had crashed among the trees that sheltered our mess, and a branch, after being jerked yards high in the air, had fallen plunk through the cook's bed. And they were not long-range shells either. Also, there had been seven shots from the most wicked, the most unsettling weapon in the Hun armoury—the 4·2 high-velocity gun, that you don't hear until it is past you, so to speak. One shell grazed the top of the office in which the doctor and myself were sitting; another snapped off a tree-trunk like—well, as a 4·2 does snap off a tree-trunk. Most ominous sign of all—when the seven shots had been fired, three ugly-looking holes ringed themselves round the Colonel's hut. West, a Hun aeroplane, with irritating insouciance, circled above our camp, not more than five hundred feet up. Our "Archies" made a lot of noise, and enjoyed their customary success: the Hun airman sailed calmly back to his own lines.

6 P.M.: The Adjutant of the R.H.A. Brigade came in to tell me that the enemy were getting closer, and that the break-through on our right admitted of no doubt. I despatched written orders to the battery waggon lines for gun teams and limbers to be brought up to within a thousand yards of the guns.

7 P.M.: The Colonel was back. A battery that had only reached France three days before had been put under his command,

to compensate for the loss of seven guns from B and D batteries. It was getting dark, but the officers at the O.P.'s in front of the wood were still able to pick up moving targets, and many Germans were being accounted for.

The Colonel found time to mention more episodes of the March Twenty-first fighting. "Every bridge over the canal was blown up by 6.30 this morning," he said; "but, do you know that C Battery's cook, who had got left behind last night, and seems to have wandered about a good deal, did not come over until nine o'clock this morning? No wonder we retired in comfort."

The Brigadier had told him more of what had happened to the —rd, our companion Divisional Artillery Brigade. "Their A Battery put up a wonderful fight—got infantry and trench mortars to help, and didn't come away until 10 P.M., after putting their guns out of action. One gunner did extraordinarily stout work. Unaided, and with a rifle, he held up a Boche machine-gun party that had worked round on the battery's left flank, and later, with three others, captured the machine-gun. One Boche, who broke through, he chased over half the country apparently, and shot him down. The amusing thing is that when he had killed the Boche he searched his pockets, and found a cake, addressed to a bombardier in another battery. The Huns had scuppered this battery and ransacked their dug-outs. The bombardier was somewhat surprised last night when the gunner handed him his lost cake."

This was a gunner who eventually was awarded the highest honour a soldier can win.

8 P.M.: A dinner much disturbed by German artillery. They started a tremendous shelling of the wood in which we were encamped. Salvos of 5·9's made deafening crashes among the trees, and the earth was shaken by the heavier, more awe-inspiring "crump" of the 8-inch how. There was now, too, a steady bombardment of Z——, the village, a mile and a half behind, in which the battery waggon lines had been installed.

The Colonel came to a rapid decision. "They'll make Z—— and the wood too hot for waggon lines to-night," he remarked. "We'll move them at once to the other side of Z——. Dump them on the roadside. You'd better go and see it carried out. Leave me two cycle orderlies, and I'll stay with the infantry brigade. They have a mined dug-out here."

So, for the second time in twenty-four hours, we did a night retirement. Infantry were coming back along the road, and big shells were falling at regular intervals.

Any amount of retreating traffic on the other side of Z——, but no signs of panic or confusion. A block caused by supply lorries coming from the opposite direction threatened to hold up some ambulance cars, but it was only

momentary. Our little American doctor did good work here, galloping off to halt the supply lorries and raising Cain until the traffic sorted itself out.

I selected a field near the roadside for Headquarter waggon lines. A stream ran conveniently by. The horses were watered and fed; our Headquarter notice-board was duly affixed to a roadside tree; and the doctor added to his previous achievement by tying a tarpaulin to the side of the mess cart, so that "Swiffy," the doctor himself, and myself had shelter when we lay down.

The moon rose glorious, serene; there was no need for candles to light us to bed. We slept heavily, too tired to worry about the morrow, or the menacing drone of Hun 'planes overhead.

VI.

I have tried to explain how "this flood-burst of moving war, such as the world had never before seen," affected one unit of the R.F.A., and one unimportant civilian soldier who was doing Adjutant; how the immensity and swift thoroughness of the German effort must have been realised by the casual newspaper reader in England more quickly than by the average officer or man who had to fight against it.

5.30 A.M.: That six hours' sleep under a tarpaulin did me all the good in the world, and by 5 A.M. I was out seeing that our Headquarter horses were being groomed and fed and got ready for immediate action.

The guns were particularly quiet, and I remember thinking: we have retreated eight miles in forty-eight hours—it's about time we stopped. Something is sure to be doing farther north, where we are so much stronger.

Breakfast and a shave; then a move forward to find the Colonel, and to learn whether he wanted the waggon lines brought up again. It was a lovely morning. A beautiful stretch of meadowland skirted the road leading back to X——, and my horse cantered as if the buoyancy of spring possessed him also. I caught up Fentiman of C Battery, who said he was shifting his waggon lines back to X——. "The water and the standings are so much better there," he said.

I found the Colonel standing in the square at X——, watching the departure by car of the three American ladies who for a month past had dispensed tea and cakes in the gaily-painted maisonette at the top of the village. They had been the first harbingers of the approaching brotherhood between the British and American Armies in this part of the Front: brave hospitable women, they had made many friends.

The Colonel was not in such good mood this morning. He

had remained through the night with the Infantry Brigadier in the wood from which our horse lines had withdrawn the previous evening. The dug-out was none too large, and his only rest had been a cramped four hours trying to sleep on the floor. With no rest at all the night before, no wonder he looked fagged. But immediately there were orders to give, he became his usual alert, clear-headed self. "It is most important this morning that we should keep communication with our Divisional Artillery Headquarters," he began. "Bring the telephone cart back to the wood at once, and put a couple of telephonists into the dug-out. They'll be safe there until the last possible moment. It's uncertain yet whether we're going to hold the enemy up there or not."

I galloped back and brought the telephone cart along at a trot. The two wheelers, particularly "the doctor's mare," stepped out in most refreshing style. "The old cart's never had such a day since it's been to France," grinned the signalling-sergeant when we pulled up. Odd 5·9's were falling in the wood; our batteries had shifted in the early morning from the eastern side of the wood to positions more north-west, and two Horse Artillery batteries were moving up behind the rise that protected our right flank. But what was this? Coming up at a steady march, bayonets glinting, a long column of blue-grey wound into view. French infantry! The thin line of khaki was at last to receive support!

7 A.M.: The Infantry battle was now developing sharply two thousand yards in front of us. Shells crashed persistently into the wood; the "putt-puttr-putt" of machine-guns rattled out ceaselessly. . . . Whimsically I recalled quieter days on the Somme, when our machine-gunners used to loose off seven rounds in such a way as to give a very passable imitation of that popular comic-song tag, "Um-tiddy-om-pom — Pom-Pom!" After three attempts we had given up trying to keep telephone touch with the batteries, and I had detailed mounted orderlies to be in readiness. One line I kept going, though, between the hut where the Infantry Brigadier and his Brigade-Major and the Colonel received messages describing the progress of the fighting, and the telephone dug-out, whence the Colonel could be switched on to the Artillery Brigadier. There was bad news of the battery just out from England that had come under the Colonel's command the evening before. Three of their guns had been smashed by direct hits, and they had lost horses as well. The Boche was swarming over the Canal now, and our A and B Batteries were firing over open sights and cutting up Germans as they surged towards our trenches.

11 A.M.: Orders from our

own Brigadier to pull out the guns and retire to a crest behind X——. I heard the news come along the telephone wire, and went through the wood to seek further directions from the Colonel. It was evident now that the wood could only be held at great sacrifice, and by determined hand-to-hand fighting. The Boche outnumbered us by at least four to one, and French help had not yet arrived in sufficient strength. I walked behind two rows of French and British infantry, lying ready in shallow, newly-dug trenches. They looked grave and thoughtful; some of them had removed their tunics. I remember noting that of four hundred men I passed not one was talking to his neighbour. I remember noticing a few horses waiting behind, and motor-cyclist messengers hurriedly arriving and hurriedly departing. I remember most of all the mournful, desolate howling of a dog, tied up to one of the now deserted huts —the poor, friendly French pointer who the day before had snuggled his nose into my hand. Near the hedge leading to the hut where I should find the Colonel stood a group of infantry officers. One of them, a tall Lieutenant-Colonel, I recognised as Colonel —— who had dined with us in our mess in the quarry a few nights before the offensive started. His head was heavily bandaged. I learned some days afterwards that he had been wounded while leading a company of his battalion in a counter-attack; and that not long after I passed him that morning in the wood he reorganised and exhorted his men, facing terrific rifle and machine-gun fire — and indeed showed such glorious and inspiring courage that he gained the Victoria Cross.

1 P.M.: The mounted orderlies had delivered orders to the batteries to retire, and C Battery was already trekking along the road the other side of X——. Machine-gun fire in the wood we had left was hotter than ever. And the German guns were moving up, as could be told when long-range efforts began to be made on the villages behind X——. Half a dozen high-velocity shells struck the road we had traversed, one of them knocking out a Horse Artillery waggon and three horses. Two other horses had to be shot, and the sixth bolted. From the markings on a good horse that I found tied to our own lines later in the day, I concluded that the runaway had strayed in our direction; and in the matter of strayed horses—good horses, that is—the sergeant-major always worked on the principle, "It's all in the same firm." At any rate, we had a valuable spare horse for the trying march that followed.

2.30 P.M.: The Colonel had selected the new positions for the batteries, and two of them were already in. While we waited the arrival of the others, we flung ourselves down in a hay-field and watched the now continuous

stream of men, batteries, transport lorries, and ambulance cars coming up the hill leading from X——, and toiling past us towards Z——. There was no doubting it now; it was a retreat on a big scale.

All round us were rolling fields, rich of soil, and tilled and tended with that French care and thoroughness that the war has intensified. Even small, irregular patches at road-crossings have been cultivated for the precious grain these last two years. "The Boche will get all this, curse him!" muttered the Colonel.

Major Bullivant of A Battery came over the hill on the pet grey mare that, in spite of three changes from one Division to another, he had managed to keep with him all the time he had been in France. He didn't dismount in drill-book fashion; he just fell off. It was spirit, not physique, that was keeping him going. Unshaven, wild-eyed, dirty, he probably didn't know it. His mind centred on nothing but the business in hand. "My Battery is coming through X—— now, sir," he informed the Colonel. "For a few minutes I was afraid we weren't going to get out. My damn fool of a sergeant-major, for some reason or other, took the gun-teams back to the waggon lines this morning. Said he was going to change them and bring fresh teams up after breakfast or something. When Beadle came up with the teams we were under machine-gun fire. Got one man killed and three wounded, and we have a few scratches on the shields. . . . If I don't get up, sir, I shall fall fast asleep," he exclaimed suddenly. "Where are our new positions, sir?"

The Colonel handed him his flask, and he smiled. "As a matter of fact, sir, I've kept going on ration rum."

When the Colonel and Major Bullivant went off, up rode Beadle in an extraordinary get-up: British warm, gum-boots, and pyjamas. He had been able to get no change since the Boche 8-inch had wiped out A Battery's mess at the opening of the Hun bombardment on the 21st. It was an amazing thing, but neither of us had remembered to eat anything since breakfast until that moment. The day's excitements had caused us to ignore time altogether, and to forget hunger. But Beadle's tired grin brought me back to such worldly matters, and we fell to on a tin of bully and a hunk of cheese that the signalling-sergeant discovered for us.

"They say we've done jolly well up north," said Beadle, his mouth full. "Got as far as Cambrai, and 25,000 prisoners taken at Ypres."

"Who told you that?" I asked, at the same time ready to believe. Did not this entirely support my belief of the early morning? Certainly we must be doing something up north!

"I heard it at the waggon lines," went on Beadle. "They say it's in Corps orders."

The line of retreating traffic and of loaded ambulance cars in front of us maintained its monotonous length. But the retirement continued to be orderly and under full control, although now and again a block in the next village kept the main road lined with immobile horses and men, while high-velocity shells, directed at the road, whizzed viciously to right and left of them. One kilted Scot passed us leading a young cow. He paid no heed to the jests and the noisy whistling of "To be a Farmer's Boy" that greeted him. "The milk 'ull be all richt the morn's morn, ye ken," was his comfortable retort. And once a red-headed Yorkshireman broke the strain of the wail under shell fire by calling out, "It's a good job we're winnin'!"

The Colonel came back after showing Major Bullivant his new battery position, and told me to ride off at once to Z——, where Divisional Artillery Headquarters had stationed themselves, and inform the Staff Captain that the ammunition dump on the roadside contained no ammunition. "Find out something definite," he ordered.

D.A. had settled themselves in two rooms in a deserted house, and the Staff Captain quickly sketched out the arrangements he had made for ammunition supply. "A Divisional ammunition column is too cumbersome for this moving warfare," he said, "and your Brigade will be supplied by No. 2 Section acting as B.A.C. There's an ammunition park at ——, and if you will supply guides here (pointing to the map) at 0.30 to-night, your B.A.C. will supply direct to your waggon lines. And that arrangement will continue so long as we are conducting this sort of warfare. Is that clear? . . . Right!"

As I was about to depart, in came the Brigade-Major, who had been in consultation with the Brigadier-General. "Ah, ——," he said, calling me by name, "you can give me some information. Is the Colonel far away?"

"He's with the batteries, sir, giving them targets from their new positions."

"Right! Can you tell me how many guns you have in action now?"

I was able to do this, and also told him where our batteries were going to establish waggon lines for the night.

"That won't do," he interrupted; "you'll be too far north. The Boche is coming down that main road. You'd better tell the Colonel that any further retirement must be south-west, because the Boche is pinching us on our left. I'll show you the line as it runs at present. I've just got it."

We bent over his large-scale map, and I copied the curved line on to my own pocket-map. "The French are properly in now," added the Brigade-Major, "and we are going to fight for that line. There's to be no more retiring."

"Is it true, sir, that we've done well up north? Most

encouraging rumours flying round."

"I don't know," he replied with a tired smile. "I hope so."

A smile and a cheering word from the General, who said, "I've just seen the Colonel, and I've put two of your batteries farther forward. They'll help to hold X—— a bit longer." Then outside I met Beadle, and gave him the time and place where battery guides had to meet the B.A.C. ammunition waggons, and sent off my groom to convey this information officially to all the battery waggon lines. After which I cantered back, and discovered the Colonel inspecting the two batteries that the General had moved to more forward positions.

It was 6 P.M., and the enemy advance machine-gun parties were now certainly closing in on X——, which lay in the hollow beneath us. But I shall always remember the handling of our composite B and D batteries on that occasion. It so exactly fulfilled drill-book requirements, it might all have been done on parade. The noses of the four 18-pdrs. peeped out from under a clump of beeches, close to a pond under the brow of a hill. Dumble had climbed to the top of a tower three-quarters of a mile from the battery, and directed the shooting from the end of a roughly laid telephone wire. He reported only fleeting glimpses of Huns, but could guess pretty well the spots at which they were congregating, and issued his orders accordingly. Young Eames, the officer passing the orders to the gunners, stood very upright, close to the battery telephonist, and let his voice ring out in crisp staccato tones that would have won him full marks at Larkhill or Shoeburyness: "Aiming point top of tower. All guns . . . Four 0 degrees Right. . . . Concentrate Two 0 minutes on Number One. . . . Corrector 152. . . . Why didn't you shout out your Fuze Number 3? . . . Three Two-fifty—Two Nine-fifty. . . . Will you acknowledge orders, Sergeant Kyle? . . ."

The Colonel, who was standing well behind Eames, smiled and said to me, "Good young officer that. If he keeps as cool all the time, the battery ought to shoot well."

Hun aeroplanes were beginning to come over. Trench war customs had made it almost axiomatic that firing should cease when enemy aircraft appeared. Three times the Battery stopped firing at the cry, "Aeroplane up!"

The Colonel intervened. "Don't stop because of aeroplanes now," he said sharply. "We're fighting moving warfare, and the enemy haven't time to concentrate all their attention on this battery."

7 P.M.: The Colonel and I walked slowly back to the roadway. "I've sent back to Bushman, and told him to bring Headquarters waggon lines up here," he said. "They are too far back the other side of Z——, and we've only a

small unit; we can move more quickly than a battery. We'll unhook on the side of that hill there, away from the road. It will be quite warm to-night, and we can lie down under those trees." . . . A dozen or so 5·9's rushed through the air, and burst with terrifying, ear-racking crashes, along the road in front of us. A charred, jagged rent showed in the wall of a farm building. Three hundred yards farther along we saw the Headquarter vehicles drawn up on the roadside. The drivers and the signallers were drinking tea, and seemed to be preparing to settle for the night in a barn whose lofty doors opened on to the road. "Look at those fellows," ejaculated the Colonel testily. "They're never happy unless they can stuff themselves under a roof. Fetch 'em out, and tell 'em to pull up to the top of that hill there. As long as you keep away from villages and marked roads you can escape most of the shelling."

7.30 P.M.: We had tied up the horses, and parked C.-S. waggon and the telephone and mess carts. Twilight had almost merged into night now, but the moon was rising, and it was to be another amazingly lustrous moon. The cook had started a small log-fire to make tea for the Colonel, Bushman, and myself, and after that, we intended to lie down and get some sleep. "Swiffy" and the doctor seemed to have disappeared. Must be at one of the battery waggon lines, we concluded.

"While tea is getting ready, I'll walk down to C Battery again. They're pretty close up to the infantry, and I want to make sure they can get out easily if they have to make a rapid move," remarked the Colonel, and he disappeared over the hill, taking his servant with him.

The kettle had not had time to boil. The Colonel had only been away ten minutes. The tired drivers were unrolling their blankets and preparing for slumber. Suddenly my ear caught a voice calling up the hillside — the Colonel's — followed twice by the stentorian tones of his servant.

The cry was, "Saddle-up!"

(*To be concluded.*)

THE MAN FROM THE CLOUDS.

BY J. STORER CLOUSTON.

PART II.

XI. AN EYE-OPENER.

I LEAPT to my feet and stared at him.

"Drowned?" I gasped.

"No, he was shot first with a pistol at close quarters. I've just been examining the body."

"Where was it found?"

"Away right at the very north end."

Yesterday's episode rushed into my mind.

"At the very end?"

"Practically."

"It wasn't by any chance as much as half a mile on this side?"

He stared at me curiously, and I remembered that this was certainly an odd inquiry, and also that Mr Hobhouse was speaking very concisely.

"No," he said. "Why do you ask?"

I took refuge in an ultra-Hobhousian explanation of how I had been there myself a few days ago, and it had struck me as a very murderous-looking place; and then I asked—

"Is anything more known, doctor?"

"No," he answered; and then added abruptly and with unusual energy, "this is absolutely damnable!"

He walked out of the room again as he spoke, and I was left to my thoughts. I went into the smoking-room but forgot to light my pipe. With my head in my hands I bent over the fire and tried, in the first place, to grasp this second tragedy, and then to piece things together and see some sequence in them.

That Bolton had really been on the right scent now seemed highly probable, though, as he made no concealment of his business, it was possible that an agency which had tried to murder me, defied all efforts to check it for months, and to all seeming had lately blown up a cruiser, might get rid of him simply on general principles. Still, the working hypothesis must be that he had got on to their track. And, oh! if he had only told me what he had discovered! But that secret had died with him, and now once more one must begin all over again.

Yet this time I had secured one significant-looking starting-point. The coincidence of Jock's appearance out at that lonely place more or less about the time when the murder must have taken place, and his leading me away in another direction from that in which I was heading, was certainly suggestive. The creature had exhibited more ap-

pearance of intelligence than I had given him credit for, and might he not then be used by some one who knew him well and had strong influence over him to play such a simple part as he had acted? Supposing he were with such a person, and that person saw me coming and did not wish me to spy him, how easy it would be to say, "Go, Jock, and show that gentleman stones over there!"

As to whom to suspect of having such influence over him, that was easy enough. I recalled young Peter Scollay's stare and laugh when I suggested that they were going to look at the ship, and it sounded to me now a very sinister laugh.

And yet the more I thought over all this, the more objections I saw. In the first place, the body was not found where I had seen Jock. True, it might have been moved if the murderer had been wily and suspicious enough to think that the simple Mr Hobhouse was capable of connecting the harmless episode of the stones with his gruesome work, though even that seemed to imply more than was likely; but a more formidable difficulty was the evidence of educated cunning in every crime committed or attempted by that hand. For "that hand" I decided I must certainly substitute "those hands." I had always thought there was more than one in it, and now I felt surer of this than ever.

With the back of my head, as they say, I heard Dr Rendall go into dinner and then come out again into the hall, and then I heard him, instead of coming into the smoking-room, open and shut the front door. He had evidently gone out again, and I was not sorry to be left alone.

A little later, in the same absent-minded way, I heard the front-door bell faintly ring, and I only woke out of my reverie when the smoking-room door opened.

"Dr Rendall is out, I hear," said a voice that made me jump up very hurriedly.

It was Jean Rendall, delightful to look at as ever, but with a new expression on her face. If she was not anxious, and very keenly anxious too, about something, I was much mistaken.

Unwillingly I resumed the rôle of Thomas Hobhouse, and informed her nervously that the doctor had gone out, I knew not where.

She said nothing for a moment, but still lingered. Then she said—

"What a dreadful thing about poor Mr Bolton!"

"Dreadful!" agreed Mr Hobhouse. "Terrible! Dreadful! Terrible!"

"Did my cousin tell you much about it?"

"Oh no, not much—very little. He was upset, very much upset, I could see."

"Everybody is," she said; and then added, "I should think you must be, Mr Hobhouse."

There seemed to be an odd note in her voice which set up

a vague chain of disquieting emotions, but Mr Hobhouse answered in the same tone as before—

"Oh yes, I am distressed—dreadfully distressed."

Again she was silent, but still she lingered.

"I am going to walk home again," she said suddenly. "Would you care to walk a little way with me?"

At that moment I wanted my own company, and had a certain shrinking from hers; so the voice of Mr Hobhouse bleated something about having caught a slight chill.

"Please come a little way," she said. "I want to speak to you particularly."

There was a note of appeal in her voice which would have taken a stouter man than Thomas Hobhouse to resist. Besides, he felt exceedingly curious. Her whole manner during the interview, in fact, roused a very strong sensation of curiosity.

He got his hat and his coat (Mr Hobhouse always wore a topcoat), and they crunched their way down the knobly drive and passed out into the road, neither saying a word. And then Mr Hobhouse got the most rousing eye-opener of his career, or of Roger Merton's either. She turned to him and said quietly—

"I hope you are taking care of your own life, Mr Merton."

XII. THE CONFIDANT.

A second or two passed before I was able to answer at all, and even then my first remark was not in the least worthy of the occasion, but it expressed precisely what was in my mind.

"How the—how on earth did you find me out?"

She smiled a little, but her manner was anxious still.

"I haven't lived all my life in Ransay," she said. "I have even been to London, and to quite a good many London theatres. In fact, I've seen you act before, Mr Merton."

"What an extraordinary way to be found out!" I thought, and aloud I said—

"But my name isn't on the programme in Ransay."

"It was, when you were last here, you must remember," said she.

I looked at her for a moment, and she at me, and in that exchange of glances I decided emphatically that there was no sign of evil in those eyes. Anyhow, I stood to lose nothing if I got her confidence, and my own could be withheld or not as I saw fit.

"We might as well be frank," I said. "How exactly did you come to spot me?"

Again she smiled, and each time she smiled straight at me like that, I confess frankly I grew less cautious.

"Do you remember when Captain Whiteclett came to arrest you, your bedroom door was open just for a minute?"

I did remember now, and recalled her face outside and its very expression vividly.

"I heard him call you 'Roger,' and saw that you knew each other well, and then of course I knew we had been utterly wrong in thinking you a——"

She paused, and I finished the sentence for her—

"A spy."

"Well, are you honestly surprised? You did do some most extraordinary things, Mr Merton! I only began to get the least idea of what you were about some time afterwards."

"And what idea did you get then? And how did you get it?"

"It was when we began to hear of the bad name our island was getting. *Then* I guessed you must have been trying to investigate and catch the traitor—and I had gone and interfered—and even locked you up!"

"It was you, then?"

"Well, father, of course, approved, but I locked the door. And after I had found out the truth, I could have murdered myself! But why did you puzzle us so?"

Her charm and sincerity and animation almost made me tell her there and then, but I had just enough hold of myself to ask instead—

"But this doesn't explain how you came to find me out this time?"

"Well, in a way it does; for I knew then that Roger Merton was your real name, and then I remembered where I had heard it before, and I knew you were the same person. When you called as Mr Hobhouse that first day, I hadn't the least suspicion to begin with, and then suddenly you began to look familiar——"

"With this beard!"

"Well, your face isn't all hidden by your beard, and I thought I recognised the other bits. If I hadn't known you were an actor——"

"A pretty bad one, it appears," I interposed.

"Oh no, indeed, you were simply splendid! You still kept me puzzled and only half certain, even after I had met you and Captain Whiteclett walking together, and noticed you move apart when you saw me. In fact, I wasn't sure till that walk along the shore. I arranged that to make quite certain."

"You arranged it!" I exclaimed. "The deuce you did, Miss Rendall!"

She laughed defiantly.

"I was dying to make sure! So when I saw you coming towards the house, I rushed into my things and went out to meet you. I thought if I could take you the same walk as we had been before, you could hardly help doing something to give yourself away. And at last you did!"

"May I ask what my relapse was?"

"When I got you to the same place as last time and said the same thing, I noticed you jump. And then you did really rather give yourself away when I asked you if

you wanted to look at the rocks, and you jumped at the chance. I know nothing about antiquities—not even as much as you do, Mr Merton——"

"Hit me again!" I laughed.

"Oh, but it was very clever of you to pretend to be so learned!" she hastened to say. "Still, I did know that there are no antiquities below high-water mark, so I knew you just wanted to inspect the place where something happened to you before."

"Where what happened?" I inquired.

"That's what I want you to tell me! Oh, if you only knew how I've died to know what happened that night!"

"How do you know anything happened?"

"I guessed," she said.

This may not sound convincing on paper, but it did as she said it. I was almost ready, in fact, to swear by Jean Rendall now.

"And so you made sure of Thomas Hobhouse!" I said. "But why then didn't you unmask him at once?"

"Oh, but it wasn't my business to! Of course I had guessed what you were doing here——"

"What?"

"Trying to rid our island of traitors, of course! I had interfered with you once, but I wasn't going to do it again. In fact, I tried to reassure you by talking of my walk with Mr Merton."

"Miss Rendall," I said, "I am a child at this game. You did reassure me. I have been as clay in your hands. But tell me one thing more. Why on earth did you come out with me on that first walk—armed with that horse-pistol?"

"Oh, you saw it then?" she exclaimed.

"I almost smelt the slow-match! But why did you do it?"

"Well, you know what I thought you were then, and there was no one else to go with you."

"Then you actually went out with a spy at night to keep an eye on him—and shoot him if he spied?"

"I should probably have missed!" she laughed.

I was quite ready to swear by Jean Rendall now. Talk of pluck!

"Please understand, Mr Merton," she went on earnestly, "that I should never have dreamt of letting you know that I had recognised you—I haven't even told father, I assure you—only when I heard of this dreadful death of Mr Bolton——"

She paused and glanced at me, half-apologetically, half-beseechingly, it seemed.

"Well?" I said.

"Well, I realised the danger you were in supposing anybody else guessed. And I thought I'd come and speak to you. I'm afraid I sometimes act on impulse."

"So do I," I confessed. "In fact I'm going to act on impulse now. Do you care to hear some bits of the story you don't know?"

Her eyes absolutely danced.

"Oh, I'd love to! I've been longing—dying to know the rest of it! I've guessed and

guessed, but I haven't been able to make any sense out of things!"

I remembered my uncle's injunctions distinctly. I also remembered my cousin's cautions and my own good resolutions. A woman, of all things, I was to beware of; but I knew I was perfectly safe to throw overboard the whole collection of cautions; and already I had a strong suspicion I should be far from a loser by it. Miss Rendall seemed, in fact, to have distinctly more natural capacity for detective work than I had, judging by her performances so far.

So I plunged straight into the tale of my first landing on Ransay, and my adventure with the oilskinned man on the shore; and may I always have as attentive an audience when I tell a story.

"So there is actually a German who dares to live on Ransay!" she exclaimed, her cheeks flushing a little.

"A man whom I certainly took to be German — a man who talks German fluently."

She fell very thoughtful, and presently repeated—

"Middle-sized—with a beard —and dark eyes?"

"Yes," I said confidently; for somehow or other I began to feel singularly sure of these features.

"Of course I know who you suspect," she said, looking up suddenly. "And you had him removed from the island afterwards."

"You mean O'Brien? Yes, I did suspect him — though, mind you, I had nothing to go on. Do you know if he talked German?"

"He once told me he did, but I never heard him, and I didn't believe him."

"Why not?"

"One couldn't believe half he said, and I don't think he intended one to. He was very Irish. But I don't believe he was the man."

"Why not?" I asked again.

"Oh, just because I don't. And what happened next?"

I told her of my night at the Scollays', and my plan for trapping the spies. My self-respect as a criminal-catcher was distinctly soothed to hear her hearty approval of this scheme.

"It was awfully ingenious," she said decidedly. "I can't imagine a better plan, and you did it so well that you took us all in completely. I suppose you felt you had to count us among the suspicious characters, but what a pity you hadn't confided in father or me as it happened! We would have done everything we could to help you. I'd have loved to spread dreadful rumours about you!"

"I'm sure you would," I said, "but, as things turned out, and in the light of what has happened since, I believe you saved my life by arresting me."

She turned on me and asked breathlessly—

"Did they guess who you really were? Did they try to do anything to you?"

"Merely murder me, as they murdered poor Bolton. The first attempt was made that night on the shore."

I saw her lips parting as I neared the end of telling her that story, and the instant I finished she cried—

"Of course you thought it was father!"

I did my best to shuffle out, but she was a hopeless person to try and deceive.

"It was quite natural you should," she said, "but I can tell you something now that throws some light on things. Next morning I heard that a man had been calling for you after dinner, and was told that you had gone out with me. And the funny thing was that the maid didn't know him by sight, or know his voice. He kept his face rather hidden, she said, and talked in a low voice. Of course it simply increased our suspicions of you. But that was how they knew where you were! And that was the man who tried to kill you."

"And who'd have done it for certain if he had found me at home that night," I added.

I must frankly confess that this little incident made me feel uncomfortable. The audacity of the steps my enemies took, their remorseless thoroughness, the extraordinary completeness with which they covered their tracks, their appearances from nowhere and disappearances into space, were particularly nasty to contemplate with Bolton's fate so fresh in my mind.

"They are pretty thorough," I said.

She seemed to divine the thoughts behind this remark.

"But they haven't suspected you yet," she said reassuringly, "and they mustn't! And now, tell me some more, Mr Merton."

So I went on telling her more: about the man with spectacles, the shooting episode, every single thing, in fact, I could remember. As we neared the house we walked more and more slowly, but my tale was barely finished when we got there.

"You'll come in, won't you?" she said. "I know father is out, so we can go on talking."

She saw me hesitate, and her colour faintly rose.

"You do trust me now, surely!" she said.

"All the way, Miss Rendall. But these devils may be on to my track at any moment, and if they suspect you are in my confidence——"

"What nonsense!" she cried; "if there's any risk, I *want* to share it. For the credit of our island these people have got to be hunted down, and I'd like them to know I'm hunting them! Besides, there's rather a nice cake for tea; you must come in."

And in we went.

XIII. JEAN'S GUESSES.

"Come into father's room and then you can smoke," said Jean.

It was the same pleasant, well-remembered room into which she had shown me that day when I first made her acquaintance, and as I followed

her in now it struck me forcibly that I had taken the wrong turning that August morning. If I had taken these people into my confidence then, I should at least have started on the right road. Better than ever I realised what tricks my instincts play me; or perhaps it may be my efforts to regulate them by the light of what I am pleased to call my reason that produce such unhappy results.

"I am wondering how they found you out," she began. "It seems so mysterious that they should have suddenly started to try and murder you like that. They must have felt quite positive—and what made them feel positive?"

"Did you or your father say anything to anybody about my voice—that I didn't seem to have so much accent as I had at first, or anything of that kind?"

"Not a word," she said positively. "Father is the most uncommunicative of people, and I have inherited some of his closeness."

"Your servants?" I suggested.

"They are Ransay girls, and one foreign accent is the same as another to them," she laughed.

"Then it must have been finding the parachute. I always thought that gave me away."

"But it wasn't found till Monday morning, after we had been for that walk."

"It might have been found by these people sooner."

"It might," she admitted, without much conviction. "But still—who did you see or speak to apart from us and Dr Rendall and Mr O'Brien?"

"The Scollays," I said, "and several farmers I happened to meet—but always with a most suspicious accent. Oh, and there was one incident I forgot to mention. On the Sunday afternoon I was doing a little fancy shooting with my revolver down on the beach when Jock turned up. You know Jock the idiot?"

"Well," she said, but her attention had evidently been caught by my first words. "You were doing fancy shooting," she repeated. "Are you a very good shot?"

"Quite useful," I admitted with becoming modesty. "That afternoon I was rather above myself."

"Then," she cried, "you were seen, and that's why the man stopped firing at you as soon as you aimed at him! He knew he would be hit if he went on!"

I opened my eyes a little and smiled.

"That is a flattering solution," I said; "but if I may venture to say so, it seems rather a bold inference."

"I'm certain it's right," she said confidently. "Did you speak to Jock?"

"Yes, I had a little talk with him; that's to say, of course, I did all the talking."

"In your natural voice?"

"Latterly I did," I admitted.

"Were you far from the wall above the beach?"

"Not very."

"And I suppose there were lots of rocks about?"

"The usual supply."

"Then some one was behind either the wall or the rocks and you were overheard! That's how you were found out!"

"Miss Rendall," I said, "you arrive at solutions by such brilliant short cuts that I feel like an old cart-horse stumbling along out of sight behind you. My models hitherto have been the classical detectives."

"Tuts!" she laughed, "they were only men!"

"Yes," I agreed, "we are not much of a sex. And now—guess again, please: it's a very simple conundrum this time—for you. Who was the man behind the wall—or the rocks?"

She looked the least trifle hurt.

"I am really trying to help," she said.

"I know it!" I assured her. "And don't think I am laughing at you. This jumping to conclusions is probably the right way of reaching them. Anyhow, my way has failed, and I am only too keen to try yours."

But I could see that I had a sensitive as well as a clever ally, and her ardour was evidently a little damped. I tried my best to rekindle it.

"I haven't told you yet," I said, "about Mr Hobhouse's attempts at detection. He discovered one little fact. The old man with the tinted spectacles was seen by a small child running towards the beach after he had interviewed me."

I could see her pricking up her ears again, but she said little this time, and I went on to tell her of Bolton's two talks with me. When I came to his discovery her ardour was fairly aflame again, yet she still seemed to be holding herself in a little.

"Some one who hasn't lived all 'their' life in the place," she repeated. "Yes, it sounds as if he meant a woman."

"Oh, I didn't say that," I interposed.

"You thought it," she retorted, "and in that case I suppose it was me."

"But surely he must have known that before!"

"One would think so," she said thoughtfully; "but he didn't look a very intelligent man—poor fellow! Still, it would be a stupid kind of discovery to make a fuss about."

"There's just one thing more to tell you," I said; and I told her of the curious episode by the cliffs on the day Bolton was murdered, and mentioned my own conclusions, such as they were, and my difficulties in fitting them into the evidence.

There was no doubt about her keenness now, yet I noticed that there were no bold inferences this time. Nor did she even ask me many questions. But I saw her grow very thoughtful.

"Well," I said, "have you any ideas—any suspicions?"

She gave no answer for a few moments, and then she said—

"I am not going to jump to conclusions again, Mr Merton. There is no use trying to act on wild ideas till we have found out a little more. You might just be running risks for no purpose, and you are

in quite enough danger as it is."

"Hobhouse will look after me," I assured her.

She glanced at me with a look in her eyes that gave me a little thrill, and then I saw a slight shiver run over her.

"You are too brave to realise what danger you are in! Remember Bolton!"

"Believe me, Miss Rendall, I am just as careful of my skin as other people, but there is absolutely no danger so long as they don't spot me."

"But how long will that be? And you are taking no precautions at all!"

"But I am! I assure you I am. I have a code wire arranged with my cousin, and when he gets the message, 'Request permission to be visited by my own doctor,' he will be in Ransay as fast as he can steam."

She gave a little laugh, but looked anxious still.

"What a delicious message! Well, that's better than nothing. But you don't imagine they will give you warning, do you?"

"You will," I said confidently. "When you guess there's danger I'll wire. And now, I know you have some idea in your head besides this notion of my danger. Be honest! what's in your mind?"

But I now perceived I had also an obstinate ally.

"I have told you," she persisted, "we must find out a little more before doing anything rash. And I promise not to keep anything back, and to tell you at once if I find out anything worth knowing. Oh, if you only knew how I want you to catch those people! As if I could possibly do anything again to interfere with you!"

What I should have liked to do was to take her hands and say something very friendly. What I did do was to thank her and assure her I trusted her, in words that I think she knew were sincere, and arrange to see her accidentally next day. And then I set off for my sanatorium with thoughts that were not in the least of the detective type.

It was Jean Rendall's eyes, voice, smile, and face—herself, from her hair to her ankles, that filled my mind as I hummed my way home. Unlike the suspicious stranger, Thomas Sylvester Hobhouse had not been given to singing, whistling, or humming as he walked, but he broke loose now. I had instinctively dreaded a too close acquaintance with that girl while the case was doubtful. I felt in my bones she would be dangerous. Now I was enraptured to discover she was fatal.

XIV. THE POCKET-BOOK.

Out of the doctor's smoking-room window you saw nothing but a field or two of bleached wintry grass, with a glimpse of grey sea beyond and that iniquitous pebble drive close

at hand. That, at least, was all I could see on the blighting March morning after my tea with Jean Rendall. The chilly damp weather had given place to chillier hard weather. With the temperature below freezing, and thin showers of dry snow driving up every now and then before a biting nor'-east wind, there was little temptation to go abroad without excuse. My excuse was due in an hour's time, when Miss Rendall and Mr Hobhouse proposed to encounter one another accidentally on the road, and meantime I was turning away from the window towards the fire when I heard the gravel crunch.

On general principles I turned back and looked out, to see a certain small farmer approaching the front door. I knew the man slightly, and was not in the least interested in him. Presumably, I thought, it was a call for the doctor; and then my attention was sharply caught. He was carrying in his hand a fat little brown-leather pocket-book, and in an instant I had remembered where I had seen exactly such a pocket-book before.

A minute or two later it so chanced that, as the maid was speaking to the man at the door, the amiable Mr Hobhouse came out into the hall, and in his friendly way approached to see what the matter was; and very interested indeed he became when he heard. The pocket-book, said the farmer, bore the name of James Bolton inside, and the maid was shuddering over a dull stain on the cover when Mr Hobhouse appeared. The man went on to explain that he and a friend had been visiting the scene of the tragedy early that morning, and had discovered the pocket-book among the rocks close to where the body had been found. The local police had been in the island and visited the spot yesterday afternoon, he said, and he had meant to give his find to them, but now he heard that they had left again. They were coming back, and London police with them, people said; but meanwhile he thought the pocket-book should be deposited either with the doctor or the laird (being Justices of the Peace), and he had called at the doctor's first. Now, the doctor being out, he meant to take it to Mr Rendall's.

Hardly necessary to say, Mr Hobhouse instantly took upon himself the responsibility of seeing that the doctor got the pocket-book the moment he returned; and the farmer, glad enough to save himself a longer walk, handed it over. And then Mr Hobhouse put a few very natural questions.

"Was the pocket-book wet when it was found?"

"No wetter than she is now," said the man.

"Then it must have fallen out of poor Bolton's pocket before his body was thrown into the sea! Dreadful! dread-

ful!" exclaimed the distressed gentleman. "And was it quite conspicuous—easily seen on the rocks?"

"We saw it a' right," said the man.

"And yet the police never noticed it! Dear me, dear me! Well, well, I'll give it to the doctor. Good morning, my good fellow, and many thanks; good morning!"

Over the smoking-room fire I examined this discovery very thoughtfully. That it should have lain on the rocks all the time, and nobody, not even the police, noticed it till now, seemed strange. Still, when one came to think of it, the brown colour was very like the sea-weed, and among that jumble of boulders such a thing might readily have happened. But certainly it had fallen out before the body was thrown into the sea, as its condition proved.

I glanced through the entries till I came to the very last the poor man had made, and then I sat up and opened my eyes very wide indeed. Plainly and distinctly these mems were jotted:—

"Proof positive O'B. or confederate.

To be discovered whether O'B. himself—or the other?

Possibilities—

Thomsons—No.

Scotts—No.

Scollays—No."

The Thomsons and Scotts I knew to be tenants of seaboard farms like the Scollays, and after the Scollays came three other names, each with "No" written after them. A pencil mark also was scored across all the six names.

So here was Bolton's secret. Either O'Brien was actually in the island himself, or he had a "confederate" here, and since that entry was made, one of the two had crowned his series of crimes by murdering the man who was on his track. And who was this confederate? Or alternatively, where was O'Brien himself lurking? Obviously the six names were people definitely acquitted—in Bolton's estimation, anyhow; for the "No" and the line through their names could only mean that.

In this list certain names were not included—I had got so far when I happened to glance at the clock and started to my feet. My appointment with Jean was already overdue.

No sign of her when I reached the road, so I set off to walk slowly towards her house, thinking, thinking, thinking. Of course the man most of all to be suspected was her own cousin. And if he were in it, I knew that any person of common sense would warn me to beware of confiding in his only relatives in the island. But I felt sure I knew better than any person of mere common sense. Still, I could scarcely ask her to abet me in convicting the doctor. Then I must not show her the note-book. And that meant a breach in our confidence at the very start.

I had walked on till I was approaching her house, and still there was no sign of her

ahead, nor was there any conclusion in my mind. And then I chanced to look round and saw her hastening after me, about a couple of hundred yards away. I wheeled round, and on the instant leapt to one of my typical, haphazard decisions. I would simply show her the pocket-book and see how she took it.

She had evidently been running, and met me half-cross and half-laughing, and divinely flushed after her stern-chase.

"I've been chasing you for miles!" she cried. "Why ever didn't you look round?"

"But I thought you were coming straight from home!"

"I never said so, and I wasn't! I've been somewhere else first."

There seemed to be a hint of something significant in these last words, but I was so eager to come to the point that I never paused to question her.

"I am dreadfully sorry," I said, "but I was thinking so hard I never thought of looking round. I have got some news for you."

Her eyes sparkled.

"What is it?" she cried.

"Bolton's pocket-book has been found among the rocks, and this was his last entry before he was killed."

I handed her the book open at the place, and watched her face as she read. And one thing her expression revealed beyond any possibility of doubt. She was utterly and completely taken aback, and for some moments simply stared at the jottings in dead silence. Then I saw a sudden gleam in her eye, and a moment later she turned to me and cried—

"This wasn't written by Bolton!"

It was my turn to stare.

"Not written by Bolton!" I exclaimed. "Let me look at it again."

Standing there in the middle of the windy road, we quite forgot the temperature, and a passing snow-shower even whipped us unnoticed.

"Look!" she said. "The writing is thicker and blacker and a little bigger than the other entries."

"It was evidently written with a different pencil, or with a blunt-pointed pencil. A man writing with a short blunt stump naturally writes a little bigger and blacker. But look at the *t*'s and the *r*'s and the capital *P*; in fact, look at all the letters. They are exactly the same type."

"Of course, any one trying to copy another man's hand would make his letters the same," she retorted; "but the character isn't the same. Can't you see?"

"There is a slight difference," I admitted, "but I really can't honestly say I see any sufficient ground for putting this down as a fake. Besides, what do you suppose it is—a practical joke?"

"No, of course not. It was written by the real murderer to put people off the scent."

I tried not to smile, but I am afraid I did.

"Another brilliant guess!" I said, and then hastened to add, "but a most ingenious

one, and quite possibly—very probably, in fact—you are right."

But she saw through my compliments, and I felt rather than observed an instant change in her.

"Oh, you may be right," she said, and handed me back the pocket-book.

"Or wrong," I replied, "but I mean to try and discover which."

Instead of asking me what I meant to do, as I feared and expected, she walked by my side very thoughtfully and in silence. I gave her a moment or two to put the question which never came, and then changed the subject.

"And have you discovered anything?" I asked

"Not discovered — only guessed," she answered with a smile in her eyes, half defiant, half mischievous.

"And what have you guessed?"

"Oh, I won't trouble you with mere guesses. I must find something out first—something really convincing, like that note-book."

I was a little piqued, but I merely laughed and said—

"Well, we'll see!"

By this time we were quite near the house.

"Won't you come in and have lunch with us?" she asked.

The temptation was strong, but the scent seemed too warm to lose, and I said I must be back for lunch at home. We stopped, and as she looked at me I noticed in her eyes what first seemed to be doubt and anxiety, and a moment later to become resolution.

"Mr Merton," she said, her voice rather low, "whichever of us is right, I think we must be getting near rather a critical point. Don't you think you had better send off that wire to Captain Whiteclett?"

I shook my head.

"Not quite yet," I said. "You see, it's a serious matter dragging my cousin out here unless one is quite certain he will be needed."

"But then he may not be in time!"

"I must risk that. But you may rest assured I'll wire the very instant I know it won't be bringing him out on a wild-goose chase."

For a moment she was silent again, and then she suddenly said—

"I'm sure that writing was forged!"

It seemed to me that I read in her exclamation a kind of whipping-up of her unbelief, as though she needed to reassure herself.

"A pair of gloves on it?" I suggested.

I quite confess that it was not one of my most tactful suggestions. She froze up again at once. Not that there was anything unkind in her eye as we said good-bye; only it was clear that in the meantime we were each going our own way.

I set out at my best pace back, for I was hot for instant action, and Jean's doubts, though I dismissed them as quite unjustified by anything in the writing, nevertheless

made me anxious to settle the question at once. The end might be very near indeed, I told myself, as I strode out with the last remains of my limp quite vanished. But what prompted those doubts — a genuine disbelief in the authenticity of the handwriting, or a perception of the logical consequences and a very natural shrinking from them? I wondered very much. The fact that she had refrained from asking a single question as to what I meant to do, suggested the second solution. And yet it was curiously unlike Jean Rendall's fearless spirit.

XV. PART OF THE TRUTH.

I never remember feeling more intensely chagrined than when I reached our bleak house twenty minutes late for our early dinner to find the doctor had eaten a hurried meal quarter of an hour before the usual hour and rushed out to attend an urgent case.

I asked at once whether he had been told of the pocket-book. Yes, it appeared he had. He had seemed very interested, but had immediately ordered his dinner-hour to be advanced, and then hurried away without putting further questions.

Was his haste a consequence of what he was told, or merely a coincidence? Well, I was resolved to leave that point in doubt no later than his return. I hardly debated at all the question of what to do. The baffling business of groping in the dark, and daily scheming to discover a window, without giving myself away, had gone on long enough. I had found a head at last and I meant to hit it. It might turn out to be the wrong head; still, I felt convinced I could scarcely fail to discover something fresh.

But though I proposed to take a bold course and make a short cut to the heart of this infernal mystery, I realised perfectly that if the cut actually led me there, it would prove an exceedingly dangerous byway. It was such a gamble that I shrank from summoning my cousin until it had come off, but I wrote out the code telegram we had arranged and put it in my pocket ready for emergencies. Of the doctor's two servants, the younger, anyhow, was absolutely trustworthy, I was convinced, and I meant to send her with the wire to the post-office while I kept guard over the prisoner. And then, to ensure there being a prisoner, I saw that all the chambers of my revolver were loaded, and put it in my coat pocket ready to my hand.

The afternoon dragged on, the wind still blustering round the house and the hail now and then rattling on the windows; but no Dr Rendall appeared. Tea-time arrived, and still no sign of him. I gave him half an hour's grace, and then had my own tea and returned to the smoking-room. The even-

ing by this time had fallen and the curtains were drawn and the lamps lit.

And then at last I heard him enter the front door. I jumped up and, with a dramatic instinct for taking the centre of the stage, placed myself before the fire; but I heard him run upstairs, and it was some minutes before the sound of his descending steps reached me. The moment the door opened I was conscious that one of those peculiar changes I had so often noticed had taken place in the man. He smiled at me, but with a curiously furtive eye, and then he shut the door and came forward.

"You have had tea, I hope," said he.

I wasted no time in preliminaries. Keeping my right hand closed over the revolver in my pocket, I held out the pocket-book with my left.

"Dr Rendall," I said, "you have heard that Bolton's pocket-book has been found. Here it is. Kindly look at that entry."

The man started perceptibly and stared at me. Speaking in that tone, and without my eye-glasses, I must have made an astonishing contrast to the Thomas Hobhouse he had last seen that morning at breakfast.

"Read that," I commanded.

He took the pocket-book, and I watched him closely. I saw his eyebrows rise as he read.

"What's all this about?" he asked.

"It is Bolton's last entry in his note-book before he was murdered, and it means that O'Brien is either still in this island, or that a confederate of his is playing traitor in his place, and that one of the two has just committed murder. It is quite impossible that you don't know something of this!"

His blue eyes now had considerably more anger than guilt in them. In fact, I was bound to admit that he looked a fine upstanding man, with his grey moustache, high colour, and an air of unmistakable indignation in his face.

"Who the devil are you?" he demanded.

"I may tell you that I am *not* Thomas Sylvester Hobhouse, and that I have never taken liquor enough in my life to hurt myself. I am here to investigate certain things that have been going on in this island, and I'll put one question to you straight, Dr Rendall. You remember being visited by a certain man, Merton, last August? When you heard him approaching your house why did you pull down your blind?"

That shot went straight home. All the indignation vanished, and I saw on the instant I had him at my mercy.

"What—what—has that to do with it?" he stammered.

"Don't trouble to try and hedge. As a matter of fact, I am Merton, and I saw the blind go down myself. Since then we have always been on your tracks, Dr Rendall."

"I swear that that had nothing to do with treason!"

"You are accused of treason: your relations to O'Brien were very peculiar, and if you can't explain that blind and this entry, and a number of other things, you will be in an extremely nasty position."

The doctor made no further effort to stand up to me. He sank into a chair while I stood over him, and I knew I was going to hear the truth at last. And yet this sudden collapse, and indeed his whole attitude, were so unexpected that I felt more puzzled than triumphant.

"Mr Merton," he said, "for God's sake don't give me away and I'll tell you the whole truth. My cousin Philip can confirm it—or at least part of it. I came up here because—well, I'd married the wrong woman and gone off the rails a bit, and Philip settled me here to keep me straight. I had debts too,—I have them still, I may tell you frankly. That's why I took in O'Brien. I wasn't supposed to keep any liquor in the house—that was one of the conditions. But, damn it! I wasn't born to be a teetotaller, and that's the plain truth, Mr Merton. That devil O'Brien found me out and started to blackmail me——"

"Blackmail?" I asked.

"In his own way. He made me give him liquor—and there we were, the pair of us! That's why I pulled down the blind. The decanter and glasses were all out on this table here! And that's why O'Brien was afraid you might be sent by his relations. That was the one thing he was afraid of—that he might be found out and taken away."

I bent over him and sniffed.

"You have had a dram now!" I exclaimed.

"And it's not the first since you've been here either. You see I'm perfectly frank with you, Mr Merton. If you like to give me away to Philip—well, be d—d, you can if you like. But you'll surely not? I've told you what I've told to no one else."

There rushed into my mind confirmation enough of part at least of the poor devil's story. His curious moods, his manner as he entered the room this evening, O'Brien's impish allusions to liquor when I first visited the house, all fell into their places now. Yet utterly as this had exploded my hopes, I think I was more glad than sorry to see the doctor come out of the ordeal with only this kind of stain on his character. He was a likeable man, we had been capital friends—and he was Jean's cousin.

"I promise you, doctor," I said, "that I shall repeat no word of this story—except of course in confidence to those who are on the track of this business in Ransay. Only in return you must tell me absolutely frankly if you have seen any grounds for suspecting O'Brien of anything treasonable—anything whatever."

The doctor shook his head emphatically.

"The only plotting the man was capable of was to get

liquor. Otherwise he was just a gas-bag. I've seen him too often in a state when he'd have given everything away, if there had been anything to give."

And then I remembered the pocket-book.

"But this entry!" I cried. "How do you explain that?"

The doctor looked at it again, and his bewilderment was obviously sincere.

"I'm frankly d—d if I can make head or tail of it," he said. "Bolton must have got on the wrong scent; that's the only thing I can imagine."

And then, like a sharp smack in the face, Jean's reading of that entry came back to me. Could she have guessed right after all? It looked uncommonly like it.

"And yet," I said to myself, "it's a great thing to have tested the other hypothesis."

In fact, if one is not built to be easily dispirited, well, it is not easy to dispirit one. I looked at the doctor, and something in my expression seemed to make him smile. When he smiled he looked so pleasant that my conscience smote me. I told myself he certainly deserved some reparation for the ordeal I had put him through.

"Doctor," I said, "I am devilish thirsty myself after this bout. Let's each have a whisky-and-soda!"

It may or may not have been the wisest suggestion to make—I am not an expert in these matters. But anyhow, if he enjoyed his drink as much as I enjoyed mine, it was at least a happy one.

We had lit our pipes with our glasses at our sides, and I was in the midst of giving the doctor some further reparation in the shape of the true tale of my adventures, when I saw him suddenly start and glance guiltily at his tumbler.

"Is that some one in the hall?" he exclaimed.

"Probably the servants," I suggested.

The next instant the door opened, and, without any announcement, in walked my uncle, Sir Francis Merton, followed by my cousin, Commander John Whiteclett.

XVI. TRACKED DOWN.

"I trust we are not interrupting you, Roger," said my uncle.

His voice was caustic and his eye severe, and as the costume he had selected for this thunderbolt entrance was apparently designed to suggest a combination of North Sea pilot and Pirate King (including a fur cap with ear-flaps tied under his venerable chin), one might have fired a 12-inch gun into the room and produced much less impression.

"Not a bit," I said, bounding to my feet, "but—er—wouldn't you like to untie your bonnet, Uncle Francis?"

He frowned at me heavily, but I was thankful to notice that his eye did twinkle for an instant.

"What is the meaning of this?" he demanded.

"That is just the question, sir, I was going to put."

My cousin interposed.

"Uncle Francis arrived this morning to see how things were getting on, and when I got your wire I brought him out with me. What has happened?"

"Got my wire," I exclaimed. "Surely—I'm certain I never sent it off!"

I put my hand in my pocket, and there it was right enough.

"My dear Jack, here it is. It never was sent."

His hand dived into his own pocket, and then held out a crumpled telegram. I took it and read this message—

"Request permission to be visited by my own doctor.

"HOBHOUSE."

"Do you mean to say you never sent that off yourself?" exclaimed Sir Francis.

"Never!"

"Then who the——!" My uncle's expression completed the sentence.

Jack Whiteclett was looking uncommonly grave.

"This is a somewhat serious matter, Roger," he said quietly. "Didn't you write this either?"

He handed me a half-sheet of paper on which was written in pencil these words—

"GO TO DOCTOR'S. IF NO FURTHER MESSAGE THERE GO ON TO SCOLLAYS' *IMMEDIATELY*."

It was printed in capital letters, so as to give no clue to the handwriting.

"When did you get that?" I cried.

"It was handed to me as we landed. The messenger went off again at once, but I assumed, of course, it was from you."

"Roger!" thundered my uncle. "Who have you taken into your confidence?"

His eye turned menacingly on the doctor, and I hastened to intervene.

"Dr Rendall—Sir Francis Merton," I introduced. "But it certainly wasn't Dr Rendall who sent these messages. He has only just learned the facts."

My uncle bowed very stiffly to the doctor and turned on me again.

"And how many more people have 'learned the facts'—the facts, I may remind you, which it was so vital they should *not* learn?"

I bared my metaphorical breast, and with as close an imitation of a clear-conscienced young man revealing the harmless necessary truth as I could achieve without rehearsal, I told him.

"I have only informed one person, and she is thoroughly trustworthy."

"She!" said my uncle, not very loudly but extremely unpleasantly.

"She is Miss Rendall," I added.

My revelations to the doctor not having reached this stage when we were interrupted, I think I can honestly say that no utterance of mine ever produced a more telling effect on three men simultaneously.

"Jean!" exclaimed the doctor.

"Oh, is that her name?" said my uncle as soon as he could trust himself to speak.

My cousin alone came straight to the point.

"Then she has sent me this wire and this message?"

"She must have," I agreed.

"In that case we had better push on for the Scollays at once and see what she means."

"You don't think it's a trap?" asked my uncle.

Jack Whiteclett smiled slightly. The idea of the Navy pausing to weigh the risk appeared to amuse him.

"We must take our chance," he said briefly. "We've both got our shooting-irons."

"And so have I," I added, "and certainly *I* am going to the Scollays. You can trust Miss Rendall!"

"You can that!" said the doctor heartily. "And if you don't mind I'll come with you."

I saw doubt in my uncle's eye, and put in quickly—

"Certainly, doctor! We may all be needed. Come on!"

It was quite dark and mortal cold; the road was frozen hard and the nor'-east wind swept over it without a break from wall or hedgerow. We all four trotted for a little to get up our circulation, and then settled down to a fast five-mile-an-hour walk. About half the distance had been covered when I first heard a little sound ahead.

"What's that?" I exclaimed, and we stood still and listened.

"Somebody running!" said my cousin.

"Towards us?" asked Sir Francis.

"Yes."

Plainer and plainer sounded the pattering steps on the frozen road, and as they drew nearer I thought I could tell that they were light steps—a woman's or a boy's, they seemed.

"Let's drop into the ditch and see who it is," whispered Jack.

We broke, two of us to either side of the road, and I found myself with my uncle stooping in one ditch, with Jack and the doctor across the road in the other. Thus bent down, one could see objects against the sky more distinctly, and in a moment I spied the runner dimly, pattering down the middle of the road straight for us. And then, in a few seconds, this runner gradually took shape, and my eyes at last could see the swing of a skirt, and thought they could even recognise the slim figure. I jumped up.

"Wait!" muttered my uncle.

"It's all right! We mustn't frighten her," I said.

I came out into the middle of the road and saw the other three rising at the sides. The runner was barely twenty yards away by now, and I heard her gasp as she stopped abruptly.

"Miss Rendall?" I said.

The next moment she had rushed up to me, her eyes sparkling, her voice coming in pants.

"Mr Merton!" she panted, and then her eyes fell on the others. "They've come, then—

I'm so glad!—forgive me for wiring—but—look!"

She handed me something small and long-shaped. It was a spectacle-case.

"Take them out!" she said.

We were all four gathered round her now, and I heard my uncle say—

"Where's that torch of yours, Jack?"

Then the flash of my cousin's electric torch fell on the spectacles and my heart leapt.

"The tinted spectacles!" I cried.

"Where did you find them?" demanded my uncle and cousin imultaneously, and I could tell from their voices that all doubts had vanished, and that, like me, they were burning now only with the excitement of the chase.

"At the Scollays'!" she said, still panting. "But there's no time to lose—you'll see everything if we only hurry—he may be back if we don't!"

Sir Francis (of course) pocketed the spectacle-case, and the whole five of us set out at the double, Jean trotting in front between Jack and me, and Sir Francis and the doctor clattering behind. My cousin and I each tried a question, but we saw that Jean's breath would be better saved for whatever was ahead, and so our voices fell silent, and presently as we left the highroad our feet fell almost silent too. We only dropped to a walk when the farm buildings loomed up close ahead, and then for a moment Jean stopped us and listened intently.

"They are all in the house still," she whispered. "I think we are in time!"

She led us, walking in single file and on our toes, into the midst of the huddle of low houses until we came to one open, pitch-dark door. And then she flashed a little torch, and we followed her into a building which I remembered distinctly. One end was the barn where I slept that memorable first night in Ransay. The other was filled with a litter of odds and ends—coils of rope, fishing-nets, a barrel or two, spades, a pick-axe, and I cannot remember what else. With feverish energy she pushed and pulled these things aside, my cousin's torch lighting up the jumble, until a large, rough, wooden box became visible, standing in the very corner against the wall. I could see at a glance that it had been locked and the lock forced.

"I broke it open!" she whispered. "So there was no time to lose or he'd have known!"

We raised the heavy lid, and the very first thing my eyes fell on was a white false beard. Jean picked it up and I could hear her voice shaking with excitement.

"There's the rest of the disguise!" she said.

And there was the old coat, and a nasty-looking scythe blade, and a number of other things of which the powers that be have an inventory now, but which they would scarcely thank me for mentioning here. I may say, however, that they made a very thorough outfit

for the job the owner of them had been engaged on. Among them was one very curious-looking find: the two halves of a large cheese hollowed out, and one half broken across. Jack Whiteclett pointed to this with a grim look.

"An unsuccessful experiment," he whispered. "He must have made a better one for the *Uruguay*."

"Do you mean," gasped Jean, "that this was for a bomb?"

"Looks like it," he answered.

"Hush!" I whispered.

The torch went out on the instant, and in absolute inky darkness we held our breath and listened. Somebody was quietly approaching the barn. The steps were not exactly stealthy, but guarded and wary, though quite assured, as if the man were only exercising a general precaution.

"Keep your faces hidden as much as you can!" whispered Whiteclett.

There was enough light in the open door to silhouette a figure as it entered, and a moment later I saw for an instant quite distinctly the outline of that oilskinned man once more. And then for perhaps three long seconds he was lost in the gloom within, and we only knew of his approach by the sound of his footsteps. Abruptly they stopped. He was little more than a couple of paces from us now, and I thought I heard him move back a step. Probably he had seen the white of some one's face.

There was a little click, and Whiteclett's torch flashed full on him. In that instant I saw his hand rise, and with my head down I charged him. The report of his pistol rang through the barn, and almost simultaneously down he came and I had a firm grip of those oilskins at last.

How the man fought! Not till I was sitting on his legs and Jack and the doctor each had an arm pinned to the floor did he cease to struggle, and even then he did not cease to swear. Sir Francis, standing up over him with the torch in his own hand, now turned the light on to his face. When I saw what it revealed, I nearly let go our prisoner's legs through sheer bewilderment. For there in the torch's bright circle lay the poor idiot Jock, cursing us in fluent German.

XVII. THE REST OF THE TRUTH.

"Does any one know him?" demanded my uncle.

"It's the Scollays' idiot son!" I gasped.

I heard an exclamation both from Jean and the doctor.

"Son?" said Jean. "What! Did you think Jock was a Scollay?"

"He was sent up here about a couple of years ago to be looked after by these Scollays," explained the doctor. "We always supposed he was somebody's"—he glanced at Jean

and hesitated — "er — somebody's son."

"Good heavens!" I cried. "What a fool I've been!"

Swiftly I ran over in my mind my first night with the Scollay household. Had I ever been told Jock was a son? No, I had simply assumed it, and gone on that assumption without ever once thinking anything more about the matter. And so, with this impenetrable curtain between me and all possibility of guessing the truth, I had gone on uselessly groping.

"Fool!"

A harsh voice startled me. It was Jock, gazing viciously up at me, and talking guttural English now. His face was still framed in the circle of the torch, and as I looked at it now I realised that the truth had actually been written there all the time for a closely observing eye to read. This man's features differed vitally from the Scollays', and, especially, there was no cast in his eyes.

"Fool!" he snarled; "yes, you have been a damned fool, you Hobhouse! Ach, if I had known, you should have been a dead fool!"

"You mean if you hadn't been made a bit of a fool of too?" I suggested.

He was a brave man and a useful man to his country, but the German boastfulness would out.

"Ach, but I should have found you out soon! Me, you would have found out never!"

His eyes rolled round our party, and I could see curiosity overcoming even his bragging.

"Who did tell you?" he demanded.

"If it is any satisfaction to you to know," replied Sir Francis, "your machinations were discovered, and you were tracked down and caught by a girl." He turned to Jean, and added, "An exceedingly clever, brave, and patriotic girl."

I am sorry to say our prisoner still further smirched his record. What he said was fortunately in German, and the words at the beginning of his sentence were not the kind that Jean would know. Before he had finished it my uncle had struck him with the butt-end of the torch on the mouth.

"Hold your foul tongue!" he cried, and then turned away, and I could see a kind of shiver run over him.

"God forgive me!" he murmured; "I never struck a man when he was down before!" And then he recovered himself a little and added, "But is a German a human being?"

Meanwhile Jean was already bringing a bundle of rope from the corner under my cousin's direction, and in a few minutes his practised hands had knotted our prisoner up so securely that we were able to move aside from him and hold a hasty council of war.

"Now for the rest of the gang!" said my uncle. "Do you suppose they've heard us and bolted?"

"Do you mean the Scollays?" asked Jean. "Oh, I don't believe they knew!"

"My dear young lady, it's very painful for you to think your tenants are playing such games, but they simply must have known!"

"We can't afford to give them the benefit of the doubt," said Jack Whiteclett, "that's absolutely certain. I am afraid I must arrest them, Miss Rendall, and the sooner it's over the better."

"Jack!" commanded our uncle, "this is a matter I think I could handle rather better than a hot-headed young man." (Commander Whiteclett, it may be mentioned, was reputed in the Navy to have a remarkably cool head.) "Dr Rendall, perhaps you will be good enough to keep watch over our prisoner for a few minutes while we are gone. Roger, give the doctor your pistol. If we hear you fire, doctor, we'll be out in a few seconds. Jack and Roger, come along with me."

Jack and I exchanged a look but said nothing. Our uncle still held the torch, and, flashing it before him, led the way out of the barn. We followed him, but my eyes, I am afraid, were over my shoulder. I saw Jean slip her own torch into the doctor's hand and then she ran after me.

"May I come too?" she whispered.

"Of course!" I said, "you're in command of the party—or ought to be!" and out we went together.

The farmyard made rough walking, and there seemed every excuse for my taking her arm and none for her objecting; nor did she.

"Who is this delightful, arbitrary old gentleman?" she asked in my ear. "You never introduced me!"

"Our uncle," I murmured back. "Jack and I both have expectations, so we've got to give him his head!"

I must say Sir Francis stage-managed our entrance into the Scollays' house very effectively. As he quietly opened the door, he got us all close behind him, exactly like a band of robbers, so that we trod on one another's heels down a yard or two of narrow passage. The Scollays were all seated round the kitchen table when our uncle's figure suddenly towered out of the gloom, his pistol covering Peter senior's head, and his voice thundering—

"Hands up!"

At the first command they simply gasped.

"Hands up or I fire!" thundered Sir Francis again, and up went every pair of hands, and what is more, they stayed up.

"Your confederate is captured and has confessed everything!" announced Sir Francis.

The family visibly trembled, but looked more amazed than ever.

"This fellow they call ——" My uncle looked over his shoulder and whispered, "What the devil was the fellow's name?" And then in his stentorian voice again, "This fellow called Jock has confessed! So I know all about it. What have you got to say for yourselves?"

I saw their bewildered eyes wandering from one to the

other of the family, and in a moment Mrs Scollay asked in a quavering voice—

"What's come over Jock, do ye say, sir?"

"He has *confessed!*" repeated my uncle. "We know that he is a German spy!"

He glared at each astounded face in turn, and then exclaimed over his shoulder—

"By heaven, I actually don't believe they knew!"

"I think, sir, if you'll allow me," suggested my cousin, "I'd like to put a few questions."

"Well," growled our uncle, "fire away!"

We all trooped into the kitchen, and the whole four of us cross-examined that family in turn, so that by the end of it we got a pretty good idea of how the land lay.

It seemed that two years before, the Scollays had been visited by a polite stranger, apparently of the tourist species. This gentleman, after admiring the healthy yet retired situation of their residence, had suddenly been seized with an inspiration. The very place for an unfortunate young man of his acquaintance! he cried, and thereupon asked them if they could take charge of a blameless, helpless, harmless idiot. The stranger hinted that there were the best of reasons why the parents of this unfortunate wished him kept in the background. He had been boarded out previously, it appeared, but too near home, and now here was an ideal, out-of-the-way spot for his retirement! The terms were so handsome that further inquiries on the Scollays' part seemed superfluous, and so in a week's time Jock had arrived.

His harmlessness had been absolutely guaranteed, provided always that no restraints were put upon him and that any little innocent fancy was indulged. Thus he wandered all over the island and at all hours, sometimes even wandering out at night when the foolish fancy took him, until this was accepted as the normal thing for harmless Jock. Another innocent whim he had of making a collection of rubbishy odds and ends and keeping them in a box in the barn. He had even repeated "Lock! Lock!" and stamped his harmless foot till they good-naturedly provided him with a lock and key for this treasure-chest. And thus long before August 1914 Jock was provided with a character that rendered his habits above suspicion, and a strong box which nobody would ever dream of examining.

Two or three times the same polite tourist paid a visit to the island to see how the poor demented young man was being looked after; and on these occasions he would take Jock out for quite a long walk, and afterwards assure the family that their guest's health was benefiting greatly. But this gentleman had not visited the island since the war, it seemed.

This was the Scollays' story, and I think we all believed that in the main it was

true. In fact, since then it has stood the test of all the evidence that could be got to check it. At the same time it seemed pretty clear that their greed had made them blinder than any one without a strong monetary interest could possibly have been. For fear of losing their little gold-mine, they had shut their eyes when people of average common-sense would have opened them pretty widely. Our questions convicted them of this much, and at the end Whiteclett said emphatically that the two Peters must depart that night with him for further examination, if for nothing more.

"I'll leave you here with them, sir, for a moment, while I have a look at the other prisoner," he said quickly, before our uncle could begin to issue the commands that we knew were coming, and, with a sign to Jean and myself, hurried out.

We were at his heels, and followed him to the barn. There Jock was still lying bound, with the doctor sitting over him.

"Has he said anything to you?" asked my cousin, when he had called the doctor aside.

Dr Rendall smiled under his grey moustache.

"He offered me two hundred pounds in gold, to be paid on the nail, if I would let him loose. We must have a dig for that money to-morrow, Whiteclett."

"Anything else?"

"Not a word after I had refused; and it's my belief you'll never get another word out of the man between now and his execution."

"He seems that sort," my cousin agreed. "And now, doctor, you and I will carry him into the house and keep Sir Francis company. The three of us will have an eye on all the prisoners then, till I can get some fellows up from the drifter to escort them. Do you mind going down to the boat, Roger, and sending up a party? You can find your way in the dark?"

"I'll make a shift to."

"Perhaps if Miss Rendall is going home she might put you on the right road," he suggested.

"Of course I will!" said Jean.

As I left him Jack pressed my hand and whispered—

"Never say again I'm not tactful, Roger! Congratulations, old chap: you've brought off a triple event, if I'm not mistaken!"

"Triple?"

"That's one," he said, pointing to our prisoner; "Uncle Francis is another; and I'll bet you sixpence I'm right about the third, as soon as you shave that filthy beard. Get off with you now, and don't keep a lady waiting!"

XVIII. THE FROSTY ROAD.

Sometimes we walked and sometimes we trotted in step side by side, her arm through mine, where I had persuaded it to venture, and where it thrilled me by remaining. Personally I was not in the least anxious to bring our errand to an early end, but Jean was fired with zeal to astonish my relations by the speed with which we brought reinforcements, and so, trot and walk, we hurried down the frosted road through that black March night, talking, talking, almost every step of the way.

It was she who began as soon as we were clear of the farm.

"Are your uncle and Captain Whiteclett going back to-night?" she asked anxiously; and when I said I didn't know, she cried, "Well then, I must come back and see them in case they go. There has been no time to explain, and they must be told that it was simply my stupidity that prevented you from catching Jock sooner!"

"Your — what?" I exclaimed.

"Yes, I ought to have seen that you didn't know he wasn't one of the family!" she insisted. "And that was one of the reasons why I went and interfered again when I'd vowed I wouldn't. I thought if you didn't suspect him, perhaps I was wrong, and if I had been, you'd never have trusted my 'guesses' again; so I wanted to get some proof to show you. But all the credit is really yours."

Our debate on this point was too one-sided to be worth recording. And yet, though my arguments were irresistible, she would persist—and persists to this day — that somehow or other I unmasked Jock the spy.

"Well, let's leave it at that," I said at last. "Disguised as Miss Rendall, alone I did it! And now tell me what made you suspect the man?"

"It was only when you told me about meeting him by the cliffs on the day of the murder that I suddenly thought of Bolton's discovery, and then I saw that he must have meant Jock. At least I guessed, but I knew it would seem the wildest idea until there was a little more proof, and so I determined to make a few inquiries and then tell you at once if there seemed to be anything in my idea. So next morning I went to the Scollays and paid them a friendly visit, and began talking about Jock and his habits and movements, and I found he had disappeared for a good part of that day when Bolton was murdered. I also found he was often out at nights, and that he kept that locked box in the barn."

"So you felt sure?"

"I would have if you hadn't made me rather less confident about my guesses. Still, I'd have told you next morning; only when you showed me that

pocket-book you seemed so positive that you quite shook me. And then I determined to go myself and break into the box and see if I could find some proof."

"That's the one thing I can't quite forgive you for—running all that risk by yourself!"

"But that was just the point! I had somehow got it into my head that since I had found you out, perhaps he had too, and I remembered what happened to Bolton, and I couldn't let you run the risk when it was quite safe for me!"

"Quite safe!" I exclaimed. "Quite safe if he had caught you opening his box?"

"Oh, one has to run a *little* risk," she admitted; "but I knew unless he actually caught me he would never suspect me."

"Well," I said, "every one has his own idea of what's a soft job. But you did think it worth wiring for my cousin?"

"Believe me," she said earnestly, "I only really decided to do that after you had gone back and I couldn't consult you! I did *think* of it while you were with me, but you were so positive that there was no need for wiring that I thought you might absolutely refuse to let me in any case."

"And so you decided to decide after I had gone? I see! Well, all I can say is I have been very judiciously handled."

"You are frightfully good-natured!" she declared, apparently in all sincerity.

I had given up debating my virtues by this time.

"It's this sea air," I said modestly, and enjoyed the sensation of trying to see her smile in the dark, and imagining how she would look if it were lighter.

Going over each incident together as we hurried down the island that night, I was glad to find, however, one part of my conduct which events had thoroughly justified. If on that first night I had not instantly assumed the rôle of a fellow-Hun, I assuredly should not have been walking with Jean Rendall now. Undoubtedly I had kept my enemy thinking up till that unfortunate Sunday afternoon, when I had made my fatal blunder of trying to enlist the gabbling Jock as an ally, or I should have been dead long before then.

"You guessed right," I said. "That was when I gave myself away—only it was not to any one behind a wall! And do you know, I believe the fellow actually tried me with the proper answer for the sheep riddle, only I could make nothing out of it. Was I an idiot, or would any one have done the same?"

"Any one!" she said with conviction. "And don't you think I was right now about the reason why he stopped firing next day?"

"I begin to think you were. He was cunning enough to see that it wasn't worth while running any risks, when he could probably get a sitting shot next time. And he would have got me if you hadn't arrested me. Heavens! To

think of that man single-handed defying the British Navy and the British Police, and actually making it impossible for any pursuer he considered dangerous to remain alive in this island! Bolton went, poor chap, and I would have gone but for you."

Perhaps I pressed her arm a little. Anyhow, she answered nothing for a moment, and then, in a low voice, said—

"Poor Bolton! Oh, you've no idea how frightened I got that morning when I heard the news!"

I knew it was not for herself she was frightened, and my heart beat quicker.

"I wonder how it happened," she went on. "I've often wondered since!"

"If I may venture to guess too," I said, "I should say that Bolton was undoubtedly on the right track. He had found that Jock was not one of the family, and had got suspicious of his movements; but one may safely take it Jock was watching him like a cat watching a mouse: very likely he managed to overhear Bolton making inquiries, and he deliberately laid a scent for him that took him to the cliffs."

"That sounds very likely," said she. "And then he took Bolton's pocket-book and made those entries."

"That pocket-book is rather a sore subject!" I said.

I heard a little gurgle of laughter, but then she did not know how sore the subject was. My scene with the unfortunate doctor was hardly my happiest recollection of Ransay.

And so we went on trotting and walking and talking, and all the time I was realising more and more vividly that if this could only be made the first of ten thousand evenings with her, I should be the luckiest man in the world. Also I was realising that for some reason she seemed to think I had done something rather heroic in returning to the place where I had nearly been scythed and shot, and tackling the unknown enemy single-handed, especially after she happened to discover I had been wounded. It made me feel—well, a little abashed and dreadfully afraid of being found out when she knew me better, but extraordinarily happy for the moment.

But for one sobering fact I should have told her everything I felt and hoped before that walk was over. The beard of Thomas Sylvester Hobhouse still wagged between us. Till I had got rid of that black hirsute horror I was not going to risk my chances of happiness. It was pitch-dark, I admit; but then, in certain delicate situations—well, if I were a girl I should strongly object, especially if I knew it were dyed and didn't know if the dye would run.

And so we sent up the reinforcements, and then I saw her home, and hurried back myself with a dancing heart to meet the others.

XIX. OUR MORNING CALL.

John Whiteclett and the three prisoners went aboard at once, but the doctor and I easily persuaded my uncle to spend the night with us. He was very stiff, poor old boy! after his exertions, and went early to bed, but I had a busy night of it. With the aid of the doctor's razors and the doctor's medical skill I finally got rid of the beard and the dye about 2 A.M., and went to sleep a clean-shaved blond once more.

During breakfast next morning I noticed more than once my uncle's eyes fixed on me in a very significant way, and Dr Rendall seemed to notice it too, for when breakfast was over he tactfully left us to ourselves.

"H'm, you've lost no time in making yourself look like a Christian again, I notice," my uncle began.

"I lost no time in beginning, sir, but I assure you it was a devilish stiff conversion."

"And what was your hurry, Roger?"

"Anxiety to do you credit, Uncle Francis."

"You are becoming a dutiful nephew damned suddenly," observed Sir Francis.

"It has come on during this lonely life," I explained.

"In that case what shall we do with ourselves this morning? Revisit the scene of last night's affair, eh?"

"I thought a walk in the other direction might give you a better idea of this interesting island," I suggested.

"Is there anything to see in the other direction?" he inquired, still with the same gravity, but with an eye that inadvertently twinkled every now and then.

"I thought of presenting you to the proprietor of the island, sir."

My uncle looked at me fixedly for a moment and then abruptly inquired—

"Do you mean to marry her, Roger?"

"That's entirely for her to say, Uncle Francis."

"Well, you'll be deuced lucky if she says 'yes'! By the way, what are you going to marry on?"

This was a somewhat delicate question, but I thought it best to be candid.

"The advertised reward," I replied.

"For what, may I ask?"

"For catching the spy."

"Oh, *you* claim that?"

"No; she does."

My uncle smiled beneficently.

"That's all right, old fellow," said he, "and I'll intimate as much to her father. Come on! Now you've shaved, what are you waiting for?"

"Your blessing, sir; but I'm ready now."

The very weather was encouraging, for the wind had fallen considerably, and it was just cold enough to make us step out over the frozen road in bursting spirits. My uncle literally whistled several times, and once he remarked *à propos* of nothing—

"I've always admired that type myself!"

On what decent pretext I managed to get Jean out of the library within two minutes of her entrance with her father, or whether it actually was decent, my memory is a blank. I knew she loved me because she came out with me so quickly, and she knew my heart because I asked her to. And as we both had really known the night before, there scarcely needed a question to be asked and answered. And that is the end of Jean's and my part in the story.

. . . . . .

As for that brave, brutal, and extraordinary man who had masqueraded as an imbecile for two whole years to serve the ambitions of his country, playing the part of a kind of isolated living base for the German Navy, as a spy, as a destroyer, and as a murderer, I have never learned his name or his past history to this day. After his first outburst of blasphemy I believe he kept doggedly silent up to his speedy end. He lived and died like a savage, cunning, carnivorous beast, or, in other words, like his masters who employed him.

AMONG MAHOMMEDANS IN THE PUNJAB.

To eyes that are familiar with the real India, farther east and farther south, the Punjab is a thing by itself. The Hindu there seems to have taken the look of the Mahommedan or the Sikh, as some animals assume a protective colouring, and some plants imitate the forms of neighbours. And the thoughts of men, as well as the shapes and the ways of them, have a turn of their own: not, indeed, a tolerant turn, but a turn that is not too close and too faithful upon the track of tradition, and not too reverent towards the claims of caste. We are very far away from the India in which a Brahman can make outcry at the passage of ordinary unhallowed man betwixt the wind and his nobility.

And Islam flourishes in its full spiritual vigour, though not without a strong sense of secular rivals too well-equipped. The red fez which has displaced the turban as the headdress of the educated class during the past twenty years, and the crescent and star which often figure as emblems, bear testimony to the pride with which Indian Muslims regard the great kingdom which a Muslim still rules. The British Empire, of which they are citizens, is at war with that kingdom. Where does the allegiance of their hearts lie? Is it lip-service when they talk of loyalty? Is there no secret hope of a revived Dar-ul-Islam, stretching over southern Asia and Africa? We are told sometimes that the Caliph, the Commander of the Faithful, is a spiritual head who may claim religious empire without endangering temporal stability. But the Caliph, if there be a Caliph, if the ancient sacred institution can now be located in any individual, is the executive head of Islam for purposes both spiritual and temporal, the leader of its armies and the leader of its prayers. It is a false analogy which suggests a separation between the one function and the other.

There exist everywhere the irreconcilable: the men for whom the growth and change of fundamental ideas are a mere impiety. There are such among the Indian Muslims. The number of their adherents might be increased by decisive military events. Yet so reverberating a stroke as the success at Kut did not call up new supporters to the irreconcilable cause: and Muslims continue to flock into the British Army, whose main business in this quarter of the world is to fight the Turk. Even the well-disseminated story that the German Emperor had embraced Islam, though it deceived a few, made others smile.

Whatever the descent of Indian Muslims (and their descent is diverse, some coming

from the conquerors but more from the converted), ideas of purely Indian origin are powerful among them, and one of these is that the favour of Heaven is shown by success, and that allegiance is due to the ruler *de facto*. Under modern conditions, in which organised governments are not easily shaken, this makes for stability. A tottering government would fall the faster for it: and, side by side with it, and intermingled with it, lies the sentiment of the oneness of Islam in the face of heathendom.

The writer spent some hours, not long ago, in a gathering at a great Mahommedan college, one of two solitary Englishmen. The dais and floor under the covering of a huge gala-tent are packed with men who respond with hearty Amens to the prayer which is the exordium. All but a few leaders are seated on the ground. A madman, tolerated for the sake of his mysterious affliction, sits beside us. He babbles an occasional interruption, laughs irrelevantly, and chucks a youthful student under the chin. The company smiles at him, and lets him be. A beggar enters and addresses the assembly, regardless of the set programme. He wants to know what a Mahommedan college is for, if no provision can be made for a pious Muslim such as him. There is no surprise or annoyance, but some one mildly suggests that he would do better to wait for another time, as there is business to do. He takes it quietly and squats down in the crowd. Others get up with plans of their own for the conduct of the meeting's business. They have a patient hearing, for is there not brotherhood in Islam?

This is a college giving instruction in the principles and practice of Islam, and having an English Principal and one or two English as well as Muslim teachers under agreement with the governing body of Muslims. Half a century ago there was no secular learning except the poems of Sadi. Twenty-five years later you might almost have counted Muslim graduates of the University on the fingers of your hands. In the last four years the number of undergraduates in this college has risen from two hundred to six hundred. There is something in this sudden influx which recalls the tradition of the thronging of the schools of Mahommedan theology when the sacred Law was the passport to distinction for its adepts. Outside of politics, the great activity of the Muslim public man is educational, and the aversion from secular learning in all its branches is a thing of the past. When Muslims meet in conference, the colleges and schools maintained by the community are a leading subject of debate, and the funds are expended largely on their extension and improvement. Modern science, logic, mathematics, history, literature, language, are all studied by the Muslim student. More would be done if

money were more plentiful; but the community is not rich, the new learning is not cheap by Oriental standards: it cannot be where hygienic accommodation and modern methods are insisted upon—and the help which an impartial Government gives to sectarian institutions is proportioned to their own efforts.

When the last of the interrupters has said his say, the chairman, a barrister eloquent in English, wearing a red fez, introduces the lecturer, a graduate of Cambridge, and we are treated to a masterly historical study of one of the Ghazni princes. It is in English, and the lecturer reproduces in the original language notes from a French historical author. The audience listens with exemplary attention. For those who cannot follow—and they must be the great majority, having small English and less French—it is enough that this is the learning which they desire for their sons, the stepping-stone to place and livelihood.

For it is as a stepping-stone, and not for itself or for the enlargement of vision or the invigoration of the mind, that Western learning in the form in which it is offered is valued by the mass of those who follow it. The good things of the spirit are supplied by religion: other studies offer the hope of an income in the professions or in the service of Government. Take away that goal, and few indeed will cross the river by the slippery foothold which threatens a half-way ducking to all but the surest-footed. Or let the goal remain, and set up another and a different bridge for the approach to it, and you will see it no less thronged than the old one. Be it the word-perfect memory of some one else's views in criticism upon an alien literature perfunctorily read, the long line of infinitely industrious travellers will still go picking their painful path across its rocky barrenness, so long as they see the distant prospect of an honourable subsistence at the farther end.

Those who make the bridge and determine its materials have a large responsibility, therefore. They do not discharge it by exclaiming upon the perversity of using learning as a means to a salary and a pension. How, pray, do those able exploiters of examination, Messrs Crammer and Passum, make their money? and did you, Mr Proconsul Minor, entirely ignore the prospects of a scholarship and a successful attack on the batteries of Cannon Row when you chose a school for Master Jack? How many English parents, and how many of their sons, value learning for its own sake?

In this comparison between East and West our Muslims of Northern India are not losers. Alongside of the quest of an income lies something better—a great, sometimes it seems an exaggerated, hope of the virtues of the new light. By dispelling error in things secular, it is expected to remove weaknesses which mar

character, as well as to illumine the dark places of the mind. Let us hope that the trust is well-founded. And if education can give wisdom as well as knowledge, why should the dream be a delusion? The ancients dreamed it, and had visions of virtue growing unhindered when the weeds of error were removed.

But getting by heart other people's thoughts will not raise this shy crop.

In the meanwhile our lecturer's English and French learning is heard with the respectful appreciation which an essay in Chinese would earn, if Chinese were the passport to the public examinations.

The Muslim chairman is on his feet, and speaking, in English of course, of the aspirations of his people and of the obstacles that lie in the way of their fulfilment. He says much of the extension of the schools and colleges, and of the sacrifices made to spread education, less of the contributions which the Government has made to it. He draws a picture of the rapid advances made by the other religious communities, and of the economic strength which gives them the first place, and urges the disparity of the numbers in the services, particularly among school inspectors. It is for the Government, he argues, to equalise advantages. Then he describes the help given by his people in the prosecution of the war, the thousands of Muslim recruits who have joined the Army, the general—it is not universal—abstention from embarrassing political action, and declares that loyalty has been maintained in circumstances "unprecedented in history." The audience, or a section of it, has enough English to understand this, and greets it with a great roar of applause. Both the dictum and the applause which follows it are plainly addressed to the Government, through us, who are assumed, with or without reason, to be of its counsels. But there is not one look of unfriendliness, or even of reserve or suspicion. It is as though the assembly said to us: "Now you know what we expect. Speak up for us. We do not sell our loyalty; but remember what we might have done and did not do. We look for something more than our arithmetical share, a helping rather generous than just."

Perhaps there are others with the same expectations, and some of the same reasons for holding them; but the others cannot point to a great centre of religious or political attraction outside of the Empire of which they form a part.

One half of India's commentators focuses vision upon the towns and upon the educated few. The other half ignores them. In this reciprocal blindness is the root of many controversies and misunderstandings. We would be neither of the one nor of the other. The leaven is a little thing, and slow of working: yet it leaveneth the lump at last. What of the lump, *rudis indigestaque moles*, of which our fraction here in the Pun-

jab includes a hundred tribes ignorant alike of the outside world and of one another, busy with blood-feuds and cattle-reiving, the saving and reaping of little crops, the pasturing of little flocks and herds, the fighting out of little quarrels in the courts and in the village—some attentive to little except the forms of religion, some at the call of local saints, some under the sway of feudal or patriarchal chieftains, some equals among their like in communities as democratic as an ancient city state? Debt is chronic; the borrower never loves the lender, even a just and reasonable lender, and lenders here are not remarkable for justice or reason. They are marked off, moreover, like the Jew in mediæval Europe, by a difference of religion; and when a borrower is exasperated, he remembers that he is dealing with the heathen. He remembered it to some purpose two or three years ago, when Hindus were plundered and maltreated over large areas, and two figures, masquerading as the German Emperor and the Crown Prince, issued their commands for a brief space to the executive of a sort of anti-Hindu *pogrom*. Plainly, there was not much knowledge of the world among their dupes. There is education, but for multitudes of little Muslims it means the learning of the text of the Holy Koran in the original, which neither they nor their parents understand. The Mullah who teaches them and performs marriage ceremonies and the like, in return for the gifts of grain which he collects with the other village servants at harvest time, would look strangely upon geography and arithmetic. Does he understand the Arabic of his Sacred Book? No more than a hedge priest understood the Latin of his Breviary. So the children sit and sway their little bodies, as the master sat and swayed his when he was the promising pupil of a like school, and learn as much as the articulation of sonorous syllables can convey to their little brains: and here learning ends for them, unless they are intended for Government service.

The corner of the Punjab where the pseudo-Wilhelms played their part—figures of fun that would not have deceived a seven-year-old child in a modern British nursery—has barely given scores of men to the Army. Travel a hundred miles or so farther to the north, and you will find in a similar rural population, also Muslims, one able-bodied youth out of four serving in the forces. It is not that Panislamic sentiment is particularly strong in one quarter (the elements of it exist everywhere), or that the feeling is anti-British (in the *pogrom* of which we have spoken the property of the Government was unmolested), or that men's hearts or bodies are less stout. It is that tradition and habit favour military service in one part of the country or among one group of tribes, and not necessarily elsewhere. Press persuasion

too hard, and the countryside may be upon you with sticks and stones for the discouragement of the too zealous propagandist. Let one sheep start, and the others follow, say the people. But the example set in one district is not followed by brother Muslims in another. The sheep do not recognise one another as of the same flock. They do not even know what is going on in the next field.

We have looked at a sketch of a town gathering. Let us turn now to one of Muslims who know nothing of towns and little of villages. It begins with business, the settlement of disputes between clans and the trial of the offenders; and the chiefs are met—kindly, white-headed patriarchs some of them; rough, wild-eyed barbarians others. They have come from treeless hills, ravines in which the hot wind withers the life out of the man who cannot find water when the flaming breath descends upon him, parching slopes where food and life depend upon the interception of every drop from the seldom-flowing torrent. The mirage makes the horizon deceitful: drinking-water must be fetched from far away, out of the very deepest of wells, and yet, only a short day's march distant, flows a river which can swell to a breadth of miles and eat away the habitations of men along its sliding, sandy banks. The place of meeting is a new settlement, built upon the edge of the desert, when the river swallowed, in a series of slow gulps almost grimmer than a sudden cataclysm, every morsel of the older town. Nature provides all things, but provides them not in the places where they are needed, so that flood and drought exist alongside; and man, made lazy by a raging sun, and proud by tradition of lordly rapine, or hopeless by submission to it, has not learned to set nature's order and disorder right. The summer whirlwinds, blackening earth and sky with a vortex of sand torn from shifting dunes between hill and river, rise suddenly out of hot calms in which only the occasional circling of a distant dust-column tells that the air is awake. They spread uproar and darkness, and fly till their force is spent. Then there is calm and flatness, with dust and grime in the eyes and on every surface and in every cavity, such as many washings will hardly remove. Like the storms that spring out of the funnels of the hills, the passions of men are sudden and elemental, obeying no law but their own. So we are to deal to-day with a bloody riot over a disputed pasture already responsible for a long record of battles; two murders, and three broken limbs, over the division of water for irrigation; and half a dozen more murders and woundings of which frail Eve is the motive or victim. And there is a row of more sordid items—the sullen residuum of blown-out storms,

with accounts to be made up between individuals, clans, and sections of clans, in which woman, together with camels, goats, and cash is the merchandise to be ledgered; for though she differs from other kinds of property in having a will of her own, the will is not recognised in transactions between gentlemen, except with shocked surprise and suitable penalties.

The chair is the emblem of dignity; and the chiefs sit upon rush-bottomed chairs, but not too comfortably, for they draw up their legs furtively under them on to the seats, till most of them are sitting in the traditional posture on their heels. They are met in a little hall with many open doors, and outside of it squats the multitude, with turbans twisted rope-like, long locks descending upon greasy shoulders, smocks that are white by courtesy, and wide trousers: tenders of camels, rearers and lovers of horses, shepherds and goatherds, wanderers and robbers by tradition, occasional cultivators of an inhospitable soil, for whom the Indus is the eastern boundary of the habitable globe, and this bare, wide-streeted townlet (built by hygienically-minded Englishmen, who forgot that dust, hot winds, and glare may be worse things, when the dog-star rages, than the smell of a narrow lane roofed with shady matting) a metropolis. A few carry matchlocks, two or three the curved sword and round buckler, but most of them left their arms behind when they came to town.

In this assembly, where resolution is not fobbed with the rusty curb of old father antic, the law, the guiding rule is to arrive at a just, or at all events at a tolerable, decision, by any and every method: by hearsay evidence, by the oaths of the parties, by inference from their previous relations or from their tribal histories, by argument, compromise, and bargain. Under such a system, worked by men who know their people and are not to be bought, there is little delay and little serious injustice. Parties and witnesses and neighbours who know the general gossip all talk together, with an occasional interjection from outside the hall, and the judges join in the conversation. Now and then there is a burst of laughter at some sally of outspokenness; but no one takes it for contempt of court. Presently a decision emerges. It comes from the mouth of a chief to whom all listen with particular attention, a striking figure who might serve as a model for King Solomon on the judgment-seat, if King Solomon can be imagined with long well-oiled hair and beard, white turban and trousers, and coat of blue and gold. The figure is not tall, but has no lack of dignity. The attitude is careless, almost indolent, for the hot suns make a reclining habit. Between the broad and much-lined forehead and the high-beaked nose, the wise and humorous eyes light up a face that is burned to swarthiness.

Mouth and chin are nearly hidden under the luxuriant growth of hair. He speaks as one who sums up the unspoken opinions of others, quietly, incisively, knowing that none will dispute his right to be spokesman and interpreter for all, with a good-humoured dignity such as a man may use who is father as well as chief. A clerk squatting on the floor records the decision with a reed-pen on the paper held on his knee, adds his own idea of the reasons for it, to be signed later on, and another case is called.

Our King Solomon, head of a great sept, is the son of its late chief. But neither father nor son held by hereditary right, and the father was not descended from his immediate predecessors in the chiefship. Both of them held and hold as being by common consent the fittest of all the chiefs' kin. The kinsman who would be chief by the strict law of primogeniture accepts the domination of the fittest. And yet there was no election. It is a tenure, as it were, by acclamation of the tribesmen and acknowledgment by the Government. What would have happened if there had been a dissentient minority sufficiently vocal to express its will, we will not speculate.

Again, one sept has no right to pre-eminence among other septs, each of which has its own chiefs. The chiefs of all the septs are present: but one sways the assembly by the universal recognition that he is wisest and strongest, by no formal choice or expressed suffrage. *Duces ex virtute sumunt:* and that by tacit agreement. He guides, and they follow; and no voice is raised to question his right, whatever the smouldering jealousies below the surface. Under the influence of strong feeling sections break away now and then, and defy his influence, as headstrong children might defy a father. But despite these rare reminders that his task is not so easy as it seems, the peace is not often broken.

The cause list cleared and the court risen, the dusk is aglow with the blaze of many fires at which roast the carcases of many fat-tailed sheep. The system rests upon a profuse hospitality and the feeding of the children by their patriarchs. The children are being fed, and great is their appetite. Does not the proverb declare that a hundred of them will eat a hundred sheep? Aye, and dance after, though the meal were such as would put a degenerate son of civilisation to bed for a week.

So there is dancing and clapping of hands about the fires till the full moon is well up, and the prisoners of the political lock-up are brought out to share in the feast and the fun, and not a man of them thinks to take advantage of the opportunity of escape—for whither should he run from his own chiefs? Then the greater folk, with half a dozen English guests of honour, take their seats in the moonlight, with the crowd squatting about

and behind them. A rush of horsemen is heard. Up gallops a mimic raiding party, and in a few moments returns, driving a flock of scared camels. More clattering of hoofs from behind, and with shout and imprecation the rescuers are upon them. The horses on both sides are driven together, and stand untethered, awaiting the end of the fight. To it with swords and bucklers—thrust, parry, and clatter! The moon looks down on the picture of a good old-fashioned combat. "I must stop it now," says King Solomon, with a twinkle in his wise eyes. "The blood begins to grow too warm."

Will it last? When King Solomon is gathered to his fathers, and Rehoboam perhaps rules in his stead, will the dykes hold which still maintain chiefship and the willing subjection of inferiors against the rising flood of equality before the law? Across those waters, already strewn with the wreckage of all institutions which had their foundations in the primitive community, tribe, village, family, now looms the shadow of a new portent, fashioned after a Western image, but destined to suffer a sea change: the figure of Demogorgon, distant, but approaching.

SALVAGE.

BY G. P. U.

I.

"Eh bien, m's'r — à ce soir . . . ." The broad-shouldered, heavily-built lieutenant of French Railway Sappers saluted with precision, and turned to where his small motor-trolley panted and snorted on the permanent way.

With a word and a pat for his pet dog prancing about on the front seat, he climbed on board, signed to the driver, then turning saluted once more. With a flourish an attendant sapper blew an ear-splitting blast on a small horn by way of warning to all men and stray beasts that they were about to start, and with a jerk and a rattle away they went. Spinning gaily down the grass-grown track, they finally dwindled to a speck in the distance, vanishing at last round a sharp curve—a faint defiant toot of the horn floating back on the evening breeze.

II.

A sultry afternoon in the late summer, 1914. The platform of the little wayside station was deserted, with the exception of a large cat which sat on a baggage truck and blinked in the sun. Everything utterly peaceful and silent—and hot. Inside, in the little room labelled "Bureau du Chef de Gare," the stout little "Chef" himself — low be it spoken—dozed in his chair.

He had had a busy morning: it was a Monday and market day in the neighbouring town, consequently the morning train had been more than usually crowded; chattering country folk and their baskets had to be shepherded carefully; more than the usual collection of bundles, hampers, and boxes had to be packed away in the van at the end of the little train. People had been a little more prone to talk and loiter than usual, all gossiping on the one great subject, the war; all standing, gesticulating, and babbling till the very last moment, then making a wild scramble for carriage doors. However, they had been safely despatched at last, and the little Chef had turned to his telephone. Even his cheery mind had become disturbed as news and rumours came in of fresh German advances to the west and south. So he talked by telephone to an old friend, "chef de gare" at another but more important station to the eastward, and the news he gathered was far from reassur-

ing. Tales of wandering bands of German cavalry, motor-cars full of enemy officers scouring the country, and away behind these the growing menace of an invading army. So that when he rang off, Alphonse was more disturbed than ever —"Surely something must happen soon to stop this headlong rush?" Practically all the village lads had been called to the colours, and the remainder were preparing to go; things were indeed looking serious. Still, Alphonse was hopeful; "wait till the lads in their gay uniforms came along, they would soon show these invading brutes that France had not been wasting time since 1870. They would set these fat marauders scurrying back to their lairs over the Rhine, and march in triumph to reclaim the fair lands of Alsace and Lorraine." It was a rosy picture that Alphonse painted in his neat little office. But from this reverie he was roused by a shrill voice calling him from a back room: it was Marie inviting him imperiously to déjeuner. Heaving a sigh, he rose, glanced out on the sunny platform, up and down the glistening lines, and then turned in to Marie and déjeuner.

Marie was generous, in spite of her shrill voice, and a good cook. So that, despite the growing menace, Alphonse dozed in his chair.

. . . . . .

Across the railway, on the sluggish green water of the canal, a heavily laden barge, having safely negotiated the wonderful new electric lock, was being towed westward by the owner's daughter, the while the owner himself smoked at the tiller and meditated on the hardships mankind is called upon to bear. As the barge passed slowly beneath the large steel bridge which the village boasted, urchins happy and dirty threw stones upon the deck, grinning broadly in reply to the lurid remarks of papa bargee.

Farther on, from the barge-builder's yard, came the sound of voices and hammers—in his little garden close by his wife was hanging out her washing to dry in the sun.

In the village street, children and dogs played happily together in the hot afternoon.

So the quiet day drifted on, and Alphonse, his cap well over his eyes, and his hands clasped over his déjeuner, dozed in his chair.

But the stillness was suddenly broken by the whistle of an engine close to the station, and Alphonse jumping up, realised the arrival of the afternoon goods train. To-day the freight was a heavy and valuable one, destined for the factories close by—trucks piled with copper turnings, trucks weighed down with many tons of steel and lead. Some were great tanks of benzine got away from Essen before war broke out. Trucks, and towns, and factories of Germany, and half Belgium and France, were represented. But the factory sidings were full, and orders were that this train should be left to the care of Alphonse till it was required.

Alphonse and the guard chatted together while the shunting was being carried out, and the train at length settled into its long siding. This done, they entered the office and spent an exciting quarter of an hour filling in and signing the vast forms deemed necessary by the authorities. Special care had to be taken over this consignment of metals valued at nearly a million francs, but at last even this was completed, and the guard, with a cheery parting word or two, mounted the engine and steamed away.

Alphonse, after watching the engine puff away down the line, turned into his office once more—the valuable train was disposed of, and a day's work was nearing an end. He heaved a sigh and rolled a cigarette. . . .

III.

Two days later Uhlan patrols seized the factories and the village, and clattered in the station-yard.

IV.

An autumn evening, 1916. The platform is deserted with the exception of a large brown rat, which scurries over the grass-grown remains of the baggage truck, and disappears in a shell-hole. The air is warm and clear, and all is for the moment silent. The shattered ruins of the station and the office of the Chef de Gare are empty husks. No Alphonse and no easy-chair remain. The roof caves inward, and the window is a jagged hole. The floor is piled with broken bricks and plaster. . . . On a splintered shelf, amid a litter of rubbish, lie the forms our Alphonse filled in and signed more than two years ago. On the wall still hangs the mouldering advertisement of the Monday cheap market tickets, but no crowd of country folk chatter in the "Halle" to-day. There is no sign of life anywhere, till a leisurely footstep calls attention to a tall khaki figure, pack on back, stopping now to light a cigarette before trudging on his way.

Across the railway, the canal—now nearly dry, the remaining water stagnant and foul, choked with the broken ruins of the electric lock and the proud steel bridge—is empty of barges. The boat-builder's yard is silent, his home a scattered heap of dust. No urchins play in the desolate streets of the village, for war has been, and is here. There is a shrill whine—a splash of brick-dust close by—and again silence. A deafening roar as a big gun, cunningly hidden in the ruins near by, sends over a message to the Huns from the "contemptible" little army.

On the broken siding are the remains of the million-franc train, still waiting to be called for. There the old trucks have stood patiently for more than two years — war, death, and swaying battle raging round them month after month. And bit by bit they have been splintered and chipped by endless thousands of flying bullets — some are completely shattered with bursting shells —and long wiry grass springing up from the gravel tries to cover their rusty, rotting skeletons. But the majority are game still—battered and neglected, a bit rocky in the knees, but still holding up their burden.

The evening deepens, and the warm dusk merges into the late summer night. Away over the little hillock on which the village church once stood, a sudden dazzling white rocket soars upward, casting a vivid glare over the scene of gaunt desolation. As it dies away the sharp "rat-at-at-at—at-at-at" of a machine-gun breaks out. . . .

But there is another sound, faint and far away as yet—a very suggestion of steel moving on rusty steel—wheels on railway metals. The faint sound grows louder, and added to it the distant "chug-chug" of a little motor-engine. . . .

Gradually all sound dies away, until subtly close comes the subdued throbbing of the engine again, muffled to the utmost, getting nearer and nearer through the increasing darkness.

Then suddenly this daring intruder is close by, gliding up in the gloom, under the very noses of the Huns. There are sounds of men moving—hushed voices, hoarse orders, the rattle of a stone kicked in the dark, then silence. Another rocket flares up, its radiance revealing a dim squat shape on the metals not a dozen yards away, and a scattered group of shadows moving rapidly in the direction of the train. Then darkness again.

Time slips by, and still no sign that two opposing armies are crouching in ditches waiting to murder each other only a few yards away. Only now and again a stray bullet comes whining overhead, lost in the dark. But the whole time there is something hidden, muffled, going on by the train,—an occasional clink of iron on iron, a footstep, a hoarse voice. . . .

V.

A month later, the evening again, the same awful scene of desolation, the same machine-gun chat, the same sudden glare of rockets. But a subtle change has come over the old train—what has happened to the rusty, dejected old trucks?

At first glance there is no change visible—the same shattered sides, the same disjointed, hopeless look. But there are other signs: a very

badly-smashed truck has vanished and the gap closed up; axles look dark with oil, wounded trucks have been bandaged with wood and wire; in fact, the once helpless, hopeless string of wreckage has changed mysteriously into a whole complete train — damaged, limping, and perilously weak — but a complete train nevertheless.

And, above all, there is an air of hopefulness—ears pricked up, expectancy about it, which is almost human.

VI.

Away down the track an electric torch winked in the darkness, and the locomotive, which had been steaming slowly, drew to a halt, panting gently.

Not a light glimmered anywhere: the open cab, draped heavily in sacking and tarpaulins, had the appearance of a small tent. Inside, the dim glow from the fire-door, reflected from the roof and sides, revealed the dingy brass-work —gauges and fittings of the old goods engine. The fireman — palpably in uniform under his filthy overalls—was studying the steam-pressure gauge, while the driver was peering cautiously out through a fold in the tarpaulin. Suddenly he saw the pitchy darkness illumined by a wavering white glare as a trench-rocket, seemingly perilously close, shot up,—instinctively he crouched back into the shadow. But the light faded, flickered, and died down, plunging everything in redoubled darkness—and all was quiet again. But the driver swore softly to himself in impatience.

Everything had been carefully planned, and was being carried out under the leadership of the lieutenant of sappers. The valuable but disabled train had been patched, repaired, and oiled; each truck had been carefully nursed back to some semblance of its former mobility, and had been exercised by hand, laboriously, during the dark nights of the past weeks. The rails had all been carefully repaired — all this under the nose of the Hun. And now the time was actually here. The engine, shrouded so that no trickle of light should betray its presence, was waiting—full in the open—for the signal to steam up cautiously, couple on to the train, and make a dash for safety.

The officer commanding the English guns, so cleverly concealed in the ruins near the station, had agreed to open rapid fire at a certain time, and the success of the scheme largely depended on the noise of the guns covering the noise of the moving train. Even more, success depended upon the ability of the poor maimed trucks to hold together during that last furious rush through the darkness.

The time was one o'clock in the morning — the sky completely overcast, and fine misty rain falling.

And now, as the driver thought of these things, and the precious minutes slipped by, he swore softly to himself. He was very near the train, and at almost any moment his presence might be discovered by the Hun . . . and the time was past when the guns should open fire.

. . . . . .

In the battery position all was darkness except for a glimmer of light coming up the steps of a cellar, from under a sandbag hanging in the doorway of the battery office. The room — or rather dug-out — whence the light emanated was a typical picture. A plank table mounted on old ammunition boxes and covered with a rough blanket, another box acting as chair occupied by a young gunner officer, smoking a pipe, and studying an old copy of 'La Vie Parisienne' by the aid of a flickering, sizzling acetylene lamp. A few maps, the telephone, and a 'Kirchener' completed the scene.

Glancing at his watch, the young officer reached to the telephone. . . . "Turn out numbers two and four . . . load and stand by." Then resuming his pipe he became once more immersed in 'La Vie.' He was to wait for a sign from the lieutenant of sappers.

. . . . . .

In the station, the lieutenant, having signalled the engine to stop, despatched a runner to the battery two hundred yards away. He dared not flash a signal, because the light would, in all probability, be seen by the enemy. The orderly having disappeared in the darkness, the lieutenant turned his attention to the train, in order to assure himself that all was correct. Two men were stationed at the first truck to effect the coupling; one other was acting as guard on the last doddering skeleton of a large van. His duty was to signal the engine as soon as his van had passed the boundary switch, and then pray hard that his perilous perch would hold together till they reached safety.

All was in order, but why the delay? Five minutes had passed, and no sign of life from the battery. Impatiently the lieutenant walked in the direction of the platform, a vague uneasiness in his mind. Hardly had he reached the shadow of the buildings than a groan reached his ears.

A moment later he nearly stumbled over the prostrate unconscious body of the runner. A brief examination showed him merely stunned by a stray bullet striking his helmet, so the lieutenant hurried on to the battery.

. . . . . .

A third time the engine-driver was in the act of swearing, when suddenly a leaping, blinding flash, followed instantly by a deafening roar, came as a surprise and a relief simultaneously. Within a few seconds the torch winked again, and the engine was moving, the driver still peering ahead, advancing cautiously, feeling his way foot by foot through the gloom towards the train.

. . . The flame and crash of the guns was very near now, when suddenly a hoarse voice close below. . . . Instantly the brakes—just in time; with a faint click and gentle bump the coupling was made.

And now the most critical stage. Would the trucks stand the strain? If one broke down the whole scheme must be abandoned, for to-night in any case.

The engine reversed gear, and gently, gingerly pulled at the first truck. The truck creaked, strained, moved, and passed the whispered jolt down the whole train. The watchers waited, tense with excitement. The enemy was being roused by the gun-fire, and rockets were leaping up in quick succession. . . .

Slowly — gently — yard by yard they crept away—those old trucks, — not a wheel squeaked or jammed. Slowly they gathered speed, and a faint rumbling began. Would the Huns hear? But the guns were doing their share splendidly, and a continuous roar drowned all sound of the now fast-vanishing train. One by one they limped over the boundary switch till the last van had passed it. The guard, sitting on the floor, his legs swaying over the edge — for there was no side left — and clinging to a broken piece of wreckage with one hand, waved the other towards Hunland, and then, turning towards the engine, flashed the signal to speed up.

Seldom had such a sight been witnessed — a veritable nightmare train of wrecked, broken, swaying trucks, whirling and bucketing through the night. And not one broke down.

Even the staggering van, with the guard cursing and praying and laughing at once, got safely away, though how was a miracle explicable only to those patient Frenchmen who had laboured night after night tuning up and wiring together the wreckage in preparation for this great test. . . .

In the battery position the din had died down—the guns were covered up,—and in the dug-out cellar the lieutenant of sappers and the English officer clinked glasses.

It was two o'clock, and the rain was still falling.

"A votre santé, m's'r."

"Here's luck—and jolly well done, old boy. How much did you say? Eight hundred thousand francs, in spite of the damage — eh? Some haul."

"Pardon, m's'r? you — you —speak too fast! I must go. Au revoir."

THE UNKNOWN COLT.

A STORY OF THE GALWAY PLATE.

BY JAS. R. MARTIN.

Mr Lucius O'Deara, as he appeared on the race cards, but who was more correctly and generally known as Johnny Deery, had had a bad day — to use his own words, "The divil a worse." It was not the mere loss of the money that troubled him so completely, although that was a terrible thing; but that is a catastrophe that the best of good sportsmen who make the most careful and intricate "arrangements" are sometimes subject to, and must be borne with Spartan heroism. The sting of his position lay in the fact that, when he told his tale to a group of friends with whom he had been racing for some years with varied fortune, he found a most unsympathetic audience; and Ned Lalor, his particular chum, had evidently caught the voice of the meeting when he told him with emphasis, "The divil mend you!" Miles Doyne, his boon companion in many a racing turn, had taken up the parable and spoken to him with such unction and fervour, and in such highly ornamented and picturesque language, that it hardly required his final taunt of "What the divil was the use of having anything to do with a man who wouldn't tell you the truth, whether he was going to lose or going to win?" to leave Johnny absolutely speechless. The group of his quondam friends added a few well-chosen embellishments, and turned their backs on him, leaving him feeling singularly alone in the world. He made for the stand, which was rather empty at the moment, and, taking up a position in the top corner, turned up the collar of his waterproof—it was raining a little—and faced the world alone, with as truculent a demeanour as he could at the moment command.

His misfortunes were not unnoticed. A fresh-looking girl, wearing blue flowers in a big hat, and dressed in what her father described as "five pounds' worth of a skirt on her back," followed him with sympathetic eyes, and, abandoning her own private programme — which was one of vigorous and somewhat boisterous flirtation as occasion offered — essayed to play a woman's part to this defeated knight. And here let me say that if this girl spent her money on adornment, she earned every penny of it; and her father, whilst criticising her extravagance, had to admit that there was not a "finer warrant to milk a cow or do anything

at all on the farm to be found in the province of Connaught," —a statement that he often made when the fair or market was over and nothing remained but gossip and drinking. And the boys on their way home would often say that it was the "divil's own pity that the likes of a girl like Mary Burke would be ever and always following after a *lad* like that Johnny Deery."

She now approached him, well knowing the difficulty and danger of her task, and her endeavour was at first doubtful.

"Ah, Johnny," she said, "don't mind whatever they said to you."

Mr O'Deara's brow clouded.

"Never mind them, Loosias," she added quickly. The cloud lifted. "Sure, if you did win the race itself, what call had they speak to you the way they did? Hasn't every one a right to win if he can? And you rode well," added the girl.

Johnny's eye turned on her with favour.

"Sure," she went on, "wouldn't it be better for you to win whenever you can, and not be mixing at all with them lads?"

Johnny looked at her musing, as a veteran general who finds himself suddenly opposed to a force for which he is no match might consider the bold proposals of an inexperienced junior—there might be something in it.

"They are a pack of dirty thieves," the girl added at the end of her discourse.

"They are that," said Johnny darkly, evidently referring to some back number of blackguardism with which this story is not connected.

The girl continued to talk, and Johnny listened with an ever-clearing brow; the sense of defeat and loneliness dropped in a measure from him, and he began to think that somehow, he did not quite see how at the moment, he might get on his legs again and face his enemies as a man ought to.

A great Irishman once said: "I would not give a pin for a friend who will stand by you when you are in the right; what I want is a friend who will stand by me when I am in the wrong." It can hardly have escaped that very astute observer that this is woman's normal attitude. A man sins against the laws of his class, and, if there is no woman at hand to restore his self-respect, he sinks from that class and his ruin has begun. Men turn their backs on him with contempt or contemptuous pity, and he becomes a "wrong 'un." It is given to woman to see what is lost to the other sex, the possibility of good that exists, or perhaps to recognise that the evil is but an injurious growth that can be excised by self-respect. She often holds out her hand to one who would otherwise have sunk; he gets his foot on dry land again, and has another and a better try.

Johnny began to feel restored by the conversation

of his friend, and her quiet assumption that as a matter of course he must be in the right, and to cast about for a way out of his difficulty, which was not so easy to find, as indeed his fault was a foolish and unforgivable one.

He had acquired in some way ownership of quite a good horse, "Climbing Boy," by "Chimney Sweep." Very good in his class, almost good in any class, quite the best horse that day at Ballymacshane Meeting, but he was not there to win; for Johnny had also acquired membership of a gang whose principal means of subsistence was the manipulation of races at small meetings, with the result that generally the best horse did not win. These speculators had some time before decided, for sufficient reasons, that a horse called "Norman Park," belonging to a confederate, was to win the Town Plate of 25 sovs. They had backed him for quite an unusual amount—50 at threes. "Norman Park" was a good honest horse and a sound jumper, but not so good at the weights, or almost at any weights, as "Climbing Boy." Therefore Johnny was allowed an unusually large percentage of the prospective profits. The bookies tumbled to the position before the race started and did their best to get round, but without much success. So when Johnny came out for the race, which he did rather early, his reception was the reverse of enthusiastic. The ring, in fact, forsook its vocation for a moment, and "booed" him at the top of their brazen lungs as he rode down. This demonstration hurt Johnny deeply, as, like many Irishmen, he loved popularity. The climax was reached when one bookie, as he passed, chanted derisively—"4 to 1 'Climbing Boy.'" Then Johnny lost his head, and seeing a friend in the crowd he beckoned him, and whispering "I am going to win this," commissioned him to take 4 ponies "Climbing Boy," and rode to the post feeling that anyhow he had £100 as good as in his pocket. But Johnny's action had been noted. When his friend approached the bookie and demanded the 4 ponies to one, he received the answer—"to you 2 to 1 on!" and this was passed round the ring with shouts of laughter. So the unconscious Johnny started out to win his race little knowing that his friend had not been able to back his mount for a shilling.

The story of that race should be written in blue. When there was still a mile to go, the rider of "Norman Park" was asking Johnny "What the blazes he was in such a —— hurry about? Did he think that he was going to win the —— race?" And finding a little later that this was precisely what Johnny intended to do, he, after an unsuccessful attempt to ride him down, pursued him with exhortations and cursings, in which the entire field joined as they saw him coming into the straight a winner.

But this was nothing to the reception he received as he rode in, for the tip as to "Norman Park" had leaked out, the horse had started odds on, and when it became known that he had tried to back himself and failed, a shout of derisive laughter had gone up that made Johnny feel that really the whole world had deserted him.

Seriously his position was bad enough—he had earned the undying enmity of the gang with which he had got entangled, to some of whom he owed money that he could not pay, and they had him in their power in other ways. To do him justice, he hated them and their crooked methods, which had done him so little good in reputation or pocket; but how to live without them was a problem he had not solved, and the thought half formed at the back of his head when he won was, that if he landed the £100 he would perhaps be able to start again clear. Now he had failed, and he knew that few of the race-courses he patronised would be safe for him in future; also he knew that if he tried to stand out on his own, there would be a great difficulty in getting the horses he owned away from Ballymacshane in safety.

Therefore, even with the comforting words of the young lady with the blue flowers in her hat, Johnny found it hard to put a bold face on things; and although he smiled kindly on her as he took courage to face the paddock again, he as yet saw no way at all out of his difficulties.

They were saddling for another race, so Johnny received no particular attention as he strolled amongst the crowd, with his under-lip well thrust out and a simulated look of indifference.

He did not see a rather tall, slight young man, clean-shaven, clean-looking, clean-bred, who looked on with an air of detachment and yet of knowledge, who had a quiet nod and a word for many of the racing people, who seemed to be an interested and highly intelligent spectator, whose quiet observant eye had already noted Johnny, and dwelling on him saw that all was not well, and followed him with interest and a little amusement. Then at last Johnny saw him, and his demeanour changed. Coming forward he raised his hand to his hat, and said in a voice that many of his friends would have had difficulty in recognising as his at all—

"Master Jimmy!"

For Johnny had been born and bred within a mile of this young man's home. As a child he had firmly believed that the old house—"the Big House"—was the finest building in the world. He had been taken into it, when a boy, in some capacity which had developed into under-gardener, and finally into stable lad, and the two lads had formed one of those curious friendships between rich and poor which had survived an increased knowledge of the world, its sins, its

wickednesses. As years and experience increased each saw the other for more exactly what he was worth; but the feeling of friendship lasted on, so that these two young men, though widely separated, were prepared to stand by each other when occasion required.

Johnny hurriedly recounted the story of his misfortunes. It may be inferred how strong his belief was in his friend, James de Lacy, when I say that he actually told the absolute truth; and James listened and nodded with a complete understanding. The horses were now going out for a race and the two were unnoticed. Johnny wound up—"I don't know what to do at all, sir, or how to get my horses away from that lot anyway!"

"What have you?" said James.

"There is 'Climbing Boy' here now," was the reply, "and I have another young one below in the stable with some of Ned Lalor's and the other chaps'. If I got them away itself, I have nowhere I could take them."

James thought, and at last said—"Bring them along to me the mountain way, and don't let any one know where you have gone."

"Bedad, I think I can do it," said Johnny, "and thank you, sir. I knew you would not forget me."

He darted amongst the crowd, found the young lady with blue flowers in her hat, —indeed his eye had been on her all the time,—had a short whispered conversation with her, and was back in the paddock as the winner of the race came in. The crowd followed the horse to the scales. Johnny took "Climbing Boy's" rein from the lad, and led him out of the paddock unnoticed. He crossed the field to the entrance gate, mounted and rode for the stable where the horses stood. The man in charge knew him, accepted the story that Johnny thought fit to tell, which wound up by saying that he was going to take the horses on then to their next meet at Corofin, which was due in a couple of days, and handed him over his second horse without question. At the same time Mary Burke, his friend with the blue flowers in her hat, strolled down the course, dipped under the fence, and made her way into the town. Here she borrowed a bike, dexterously manipulated her best skirt, and stood out boldly for her father's house, ten Irish miles away.

She arrived there about an hour before Mr Deery was seen riding in leading his second horse. He was bestowed in a stable which seemed to have been hurriedly got ready. The horses were made comfortable. Johnny's bodily wants were attended to, then he stretched himself in the straw and was soon asleep.

With the first dawn of the summer morning the stable door was stealthily opened, and man and horse being refreshed, Johnny mounted and rode down the road, whilst his staunch friend Mary waved

him adieu. She was absolutely the only one who knew of his visit, for her father, who had won money at the races, returned in a glorious and expansive mood, in which his only ambition was to explain to all and sundry his intimate knowledge of racing, and her mother was too much taken up in shepherding him and getting him to bed to ask many questions; besides, she well understood the value of the saying—"Ask me no questions and I will tell you no lies."

James de Lacy stayed for the last race. He did not bet, but seemed to follow the form closely. He had many friends who were glad to greet this grave young man and pass a word with him, and some of these watched him as he busied himself with his motor-car before he started for his long and solitary drive. Then as he looked around to bid adieu, a smile of singularly attractive sweetness for a moment lighted up his face. His friends drew back apparently satisfied. Perhaps they had waited for that smile, certainly each appropriated it as for himself alone.

He turned left-handed without entering the little town, and, leaving the stone-wall country, followed the line round the head of Lough Corrib, calm and beautiful that evening, studded with islands, on one of which stood the remains of churches reaching almost back to the time of St Patrick; on another the ruins of a Norman castle, for here Norman and Celt had fought it out bitterly, and this was one of many castles.

The country changed, the low district was left behind, and the road entered the hills which from the race-course had been blue on the horizon. Every mile the country became wilder, and the few peasants who were travelling stopped on the roadside as the car approached, unused to the sight of one; but when they recognised James they doffed their hats and shouted a welcome, seeming to think themselves rewarded on receiving a smile in return; for this was his land, not only of the present but of the past. As far as his keen vision could reach, the mountains, the brown moors, the lakes, the wooded islands on the lakes, all had been the possession of men of his race, his name, his manner of form and feature, who for some centuries had ruled this outpost of the Western World, and ruled it well. That was the past, and what their descendant had inherited from them was an old house in the most beautiful corner of this most beautiful country, half-hidden in woods, and surrounded by some hundreds of acres of excellent land—that and a few things that were his alone, which haply he might pass on. The look of gentle blood, the smile, the word, the way, born with him, which had been perfected by centuries of tactful rule, which assisted him to an extent that he hardly suspected in his journey through the world.

As James steered his car

through the mountains that were once the heritage of his race, the thoughts, the romance of the past, blended with the beauty of the present in that golden summer evening, and the struggles, the meanesses of life, the scene that he had just left, seemed for the moment as of another world. He drank in the romance, the purity and strength, which are the gifts of Nature to those who have the understanding to seek them from her. James thought of the past, of his short life and how it was a happy one, and went in the way that he wished it to; how he had entered the army, hoping for active service, which somehow seemed to evade him, and how as he tired of barrack squares and garrison life his thoughts turned more and more to the home he loved. Then came his father's death; he returned to settle things, but still determined, if it were right, to resume the life he had found distasteful. But what he really loved and understood were horses. He thought he saw in the expert breeding of blood-stock that there was a future, so whilst he spent his leave, shot, and fished, he mused on this and worked out problems on it in figures.

But the days went by and he was still musing. The day arrived when he came down the steps to get into his car to go, but he missed his mother, and knew at once that she had not dared to face the parting. He found her in the garden with her head in her hands. As she lifted her head, her face, for the fraction of a moment, showed the despair of her heart, and then she was serene again.

"Yes, Jimmy," she said, "I was a coward and ran away, but now I shall say good-bye to you as I ought to."

"You are not going to say good-bye to me now," he said, and he felt her hand tremble on his arm, but she answered in the deep rich tones which are the beautiful heritage of a few women.

"No, Jimmy, you are not to allow yourself to be influenced by an old woman. You have your place to take in the world, and you must go out and take it."

But James had much to say on this point; through that long day they threshed out the question, and in the evening the old lady sat trembling with happiness, wondering fearfully if what was done was right. James sent in his papers, reserving himself, however, as ready for his country's call, bade adieu to his friends, and taking in hand the life he loved, never from that day looked back.

Now as he neared his home his mother awaited him in the old grey house, full of the memories of his ancestors, which was kept so carefully and well. She had, when old Thomas the butler had gone out for his evening gossip in the stables, flitted unobtrusively into James's room to see if the things, the exact things he liked, had been made ready for him. She had dressed herself carefully, almost hand-

somely, and the selection of the jewels to go with her dress had given her some moments of thought; now as she sat in the deep drawing-room window looking out on the summer evening, and by the woods to where they opened on the lake beyond, it is doubtful if this old lady, who had the experiences of a beautiful and well-loved girl behind her, had ever really been much happier. She rose as her son entered with the grace which she was born to, and which is not to be acquired, and as she passed through the hall on his arm, old Thomas, who when James was a little boy had many times carried him in his arms, threw out his chest and looked straight to the front, the picture of an old family servitor.

Mrs de Lacy, the daughter of an Irish peer, was proud of her dinners, which were of the studied and artistic nature dear to the hearts of those of Latin or Norman blood. They dined at a small round table, the simple appointments of which were perfect, placed by the deep window, where they could look out on the golden sunset and the reflection of the trees in the still lake. She told him of her garden which she loved, and how she had gone round the young horses in the afternoon, and how the three-months-old foal, by "Nebat," out of the Connemara mare, had galloped to her and jumped a wall, tucking his legs under him like an old hunter. But she said, "I am afraid the Edgar filly is not very well, and I told Andy the groom to take her in and watch her." Here old Thomas joined in the conversation, and said that Andy thought there was nothing to signify the matter with her, and Thomas gave his own opinion, for, like all butlers of his class, he fancied himself in the matter of horseflesh.

Jimmy told of his day, how Willie Fitzwilliam stood them all a champagne lunch, and finally, with a good deal of humour, of Johnny Deery's misfortunes; whereat old Thomas had to retire behind the screen to master his feelings, and Mrs de Lacy, who came of racing stock and understood, laughed so lightly, so youthfully, that the red setter dog who lay on the hearthrug raised his handsome old head with the light glinting in his brown eyes, and beat his tail on the ground in sympathetic approval.

"But poor Johnny," she said, "how would he know better? You will do something for him, Jimmy?"

"He will be here to-morrow," James answered, "and I hope to put him on his legs somehow."

And next day as these two sat at breakfast Johnny rode "Climbing Boy" into the yard, leading the young horse, bestowed them in the stables that were ready for them, attended to their wants, and before the day was out had taken his place in the household as if he had never left it.

The rage and indignation of Johnny's confederates when they realised that he had given

them the slip and got away with both his horses may be imagined, but cannot be adequately described in these pages. They called down curses upon him, they spoke of him as an abandoned little profligate, an unscrupulous and heartless little sharper, who had betrayed his best friends and deprived honest men like themselves of their hard and scanty earnings; they vowed vengeance upon him, and this took them to the worst point of the indictment—that he had taken advantage of the absolute absorption of the population of Ballymacshane in the races to slip away quite unnoticed, without leaving the slightest clue as to what part of the province of Connaught, let alone the Kingdom of Ireland, he had headed for. None of their friends could throw any light on this point, and it was then that they really bewailed their fate one to another, and pointed out, in dolorous chorus, how their racing campaign, which was only just begun, was almost ruined—how their plans, so carefully laid, and the subject of so much thought and discussion for months past, almost since Christmas, were brought to nought by the defection of Johnny and the loss of his horses; and, most of all, they bewailed the loss of Johnny's young horse, the beautiful, the perfectly-bred, the untried "Lomax," whose form they were to have placed the very next week at the little country meet of Corofin. Not, of course, that he was to win, but where he was to have been given his first chance of showing the stuff that was in him, to be followed up by other trials of a like nature, until at last, having been beaten in many country £25 plates, he would stand up to win the Galway Plate of 500 sovereigns.

This was to have been the climax of their expedition, and they had spoken in awed whispers when they tried to calculate the possibilities of such a coup. They determined that, whatever happened, however it was done, "Lomax" at least must fall into their hands again, or, if this were quite impossible, that they must somehow control his place in the betting.

The loss of "Climbing Boy" was taken more philosophically. He was a good horse, but so most people knew, and difficulties had begun to be many in making the proper "arrangements" concerning him. The confederates, indeed, had begun to think that it was time Johnny sold him "to a gentleman who would want to win the Prince of Wales' Plate or the Conyngham Cup at Punchestown," or would take him to England to run for stakes worth winning, and where it is worth while for the best horse to win. They knew that even the most indulgent Stewards at the most insignificant country meetings may occasionally be goaded into action by the attitude of a crowd that has lost its money by backing the best horse, and that the action of the I.N.H.S. would speedily follow; that their

horses, if not themselves, might be warned off, and their activity anyhow curbed for a time.

Sometimes the gang, whose methods I have striven to elucidate, would combine with another to corner most of the races at some little-known meeting, and when it was arranged between them what favourites were to lose, a comparatively easy business, they were then faced with the real difficulty of what horses were to win. If they had to look only to themselves this might have landed them in serious trouble. But, fortunately for them, there are generally a few local gentlemen who race a little in the summer, and who are out to win. So it would be when the decision was particularly difficult—"Ah, then why not let Mr Fitzwilliam win? sure every one knows he runs straight!" And Willie Fitzwilliam would be gladdened and somewhat astonished to see his horse gallop home a winner in front of a field that he had had but the faintest hopes of beating. Nay, he would sometimes at the last moment be given the tip to back his own horse, as it does not look well for a horse to win unbacked by his owner, and might lead to inquiry. So perhaps it would be his jockey, as he rode out, who would ask him to put a bit on for him, or the broken-down old sportsman who sold cards and pencils would stumble up to him and in a husky whisper say, "I am told, sir, your horse will win to-day"; and Willie, being a knowledgeable man, would back his horse without further comment.

It may be understood, therefore, that "Climbing Boy," by his honest and consistent running, had almost run himself out of use to these confederates, but that "Lomax," the untried, the beautiful, might serve them by a coup which would pay for all, and keep them warm and well fed during the slack time of the winter. Still, "Climbing Boy" was an incomparable trial horse, so really good, so sound, so generous and ready to do his best. No amount of racing seemed to sour him. He ran to his form all the time; as such his loss was a heavy one, and the gang felt that without him they might sometimes be running blind; besides, he was always a threat in reserve when dealing with another gang, that if their terms were not acceded to they would send him out to win and upset the apple-cart.

It is true that they had in their string a mare, "Sweet Annie," whose form almost equalled that of the horse; but mares are unreliable, and although a careful study of their failings may prove serviceable when they are owned by others, they are liable to be unfit when really wanted, and cannot therefore be depended on.

It was therefore a matter of life and death to them to find Johnny again if he were above ground, or anyhow secure his horses wherever he was. But although they left no stone that they knew of unturned, he had vanished from

their haunts as completely as if the earth had closed over him. He had not been seen at any race-course at all. They sought him as with a fine comb over all the Ireland they knew and found him not, for the racing man of their class turns back from the mountains as completely as the devil turns from holy water.

It was not for several weeks that they at last heard of him, when a member of their fraternity, but not of their particular lot, who had the unusual trait for one of them of an uncontrollable love of fishing, and would steal a day or two for it when he could, returned from one of his expeditions with the news that he had had a distant view of Johnny, and heard he was living in Mr de Lacy's house at Doon; but that he "had not time to find out what he was doing in it."

This interval of grace had been taken full advantage of at Doon. "Climbing Boy" was carefully gone over, and the knocks and blows that he had received in racing and in battering about the country in the rough times that he had experienced, in being hurried from one meet to another, were attended to. The horse was made to feel he was amongst friends, that his stable was his home and not a mere temporary resting-place, that those he came in contact with were his friends, who were intent upon his welfare. He, indeed, was a bit stale, the result of long days, sometimes nights, in a train, and being pulled out the next day to race, with perhaps a similar experience to follow; and sometimes after a hard race being handed over to a lad who, if he thought that his masters were too occupied with business or pleasure to go round the stables that night, would perhaps chuck him his food and be off to his own amusements, without even brushing the dirt out of his legs. A less generous horse would have been soured, but he came through his hard experiences still honest and true; and now that he found himself in a gentleman's stable, warm and well fed, well groomed and comfortable, his noble heart expanded with gratitude, and he rubbed his nose on Johnny's waistcoat full of contentment and friendship. He was rested and happy, and his coat soon shone with the bloom of perfect health. Indeed, Johnny himself had undergone a somewhat similar metamorphosis. Removed from the atmosphere of blackguardism, what might perhaps by a stretch of fancy be called his better nature had a chance. Having no more to live at pubs and tenth-rate hotels, to trust to get his meals when he could, and to keep himself going between times by something and a drink, he responded at once to the regular hours and regular meals, and his drinking habits fell from him like a garment, for he was naturally no toper, and he had been taken at the right time. When silver-haired Mrs de Lacy spoke to him kindly he felt that the place where he

was born was the best place, and that it would be good to turn to it again and abandon the rackety life he had been leading.

"Lomax," the young 'un, had been well attended to, and his preparation was now far enough advanced to warrant a trial, so one was run one early summer morning. The secrecy was great, not even the stable lads knew of it, and the result made Johnny's face some inches longer. He had confided to his friend all the great hopes that he had for the young 'un, even reaching to the Galway Plate; and behold, when "Climbing Boy" began to gallop, "Lomax" was left trying his best, but not in it. A similar trial two days later, with the riders changed, gave the same result, and when for the third time of asking "Lomax" received a stone, the result was very much the same.

He was a beautiful deceiver, a one-paced horse; later in his career, as a blood hunter, he became absolutely incomparable; but that was his *métier*, and for racing, he was only serviceable to the bookies as he looked so beautiful in the paddock, that many a race-goer felt he must have a bit on him.

The melancholy of the Celt entirely possessed Johnny as he ruminated on these things in the stable-yard, whilst a lad led "Lomax" round to be surveyed, to see for the tenth time if there were anything wrong in his form.

"I thought I had something good for you, sir," he said at last, "but I have not, and that's the truth."

"He may serve his turn yet," said James.

Johnny shook his head.

"You do not seem to take much stock of the colt I have in the box at the end," James continued.

"He is a nice horse," said Johnny, "but you are ever and always hacking him about the place. Sure it is for that you have him?"

"We'll pull him out now and put him beside 'Lomax,' and see how he shapes," said James.

"Bedad, he is a nice horse!" said Johnny when this was done, "and the two are the dead spit of one another. Barring the white star and the white hind leg he has, you would be hard set to separate them."

"They are wonderfully alike," remarked James.

They followed the horses back to the stable, Johnny still steeped in gloom.

"So you think we have nothing for the Galway Plate?" said James.

"I do, sir," replied the other, "and there is no use in telling a lie. 'Climbing Boy' is not good enough, though he might run into a place. We had a mare ourselves would beat him sometimes, 'Sweet Annie' we called her," James nodded, "and I know of another better than she is, if he does not put up a penalty."

"I know of one that will beat them both," said James, "an English horse—'George's

Pride'—he belongs to Sir Murcheson Brown, and he would not bring him all this way if he did not think he could win."

"Well, that settles it," said Johnny sadly; "what do you think of it yourself, sir?"

James regarded his man steadily, and then said—

"I think I know of something that might beat them all."

"Do you tell me so?" gasped Johnny. "Will you tell me, Master Jimmy?"

"I may as well," said James, and he nodded slowly towards the colt in the end box.

Johnny stared into his friend's face to see if by any chance he had gone suddenly mad, and finding no trace of such a happening, almost collapsed against the door of a loose-box.

"What do you know about him?" he whispered.

"Everything," was the reply.

"How is he bred?" came in the same tone.

"St Gris," said James.

"St Gris, Galopin," came the answer in the awed whisper of a Cathedral response; "and the dam?"

"By Gallinule," said James.

Johnny clasped his hands and nodded his head as one who has seen his measure pressed down and running over.

"'Tis where he gets the white leg," he muttered. "When will we try them?" he went on. "When will we have him fit, sir?"

James permitted himself a grin.

"He is not too backward now," he said—"a gallop any day would do him no harm."

"Master Jimmy," said Johnny, in a tone of the deepest admiration, "you're the devil, and you taking him out to hack, says you; but," he went on, "if that's so, the sooner we have it the better. Could it be run to-morrow, do you think? Some of them lads may be after me any day now from what I hear."

"All right, to-morrow," said James, and again the trial was arranged with perfect secrecy.

"Now, Johnny," said James, as in the very early morning they rode to the ground, "I'm trusting you; ride your best, and if we bring this off it will make a man of you."

"Master Jimmy," said the other, "I will do my best; and if it was never to be worth a halfpenny to me, I'll stand by you," and Johnny felt the loyalty of the Celt surging through him.

The course was a mile and a half, and Johnny made the pace, trying all the way ineffectually to shake the colt off. They ran so to the last furlong, when the colt, showing a great turn of speed, came away and beat the other by three lengths.

"Begob, you have him!" said Johnny, as they rode back. "I think there will be no better than that!"

Next evening, shortly after the last train had passed the little roadside station, Johnny strolled out, shaping his course for the post office and pub, which was the rendez-

vous of the district. Keeping a sharp look-out, he presently saw two men standing at the edge of a wood, but far enough inside to escape general attention. He knew all about them, and advanced to meet them. They were his quondam bosom friends, Ned Lalor and Tom Finnegan, who had been commissioned by the rest of the gang to bring Johnny to book "the best way they could, but to get him some way."

They had, as a matter of fact, arrived by the midday train, and found a small barefooted boy at the station who volunteered to carry their scanty luggage, and who was told by them to take it to the pub, and to say that they were coming later, as they had some cattle to see in the neighbourhood. They found it very difficult to make the boy understand, and it was only with the stationmaster's assistance that they succeeded at all.

"Thim country lads is mighty stupid," remarked one as they watched the boy straggle up the road.

"They are that," said the other. "I am told that some of them in these parts has no English at all, God help them!"

They might have altered their opinion if they had seen the subsequent behaviour of the object of their remarks. He shifted the bag from one shoulder to the other, and looking through the crook of his arm saw that the two friends, thinking themselves unnoticed, were climbing the demesne wall into the plantation. He darted to the Lodge gate, told the lodge-keeper to take the bag on, and, running down along the wall until he crossed the trail, proceeded to follow it with the subtlety and secrecy of a Red Indian.

Ned and Tom, unaware of his attention, worked themselves round through the woods so as to get a full view of Doon House, and finally finding a hill that commanded the yard, climbed on to it and examined the position carefully. The result was discomfiting. They had expected to find a slipshod establishment into which entrance could be easily made, and in which communication with the servants would present no difficulty. They found instead a house in which little was left to chance, and where the horses especially were under bolt and bar. They had thought that they could deal with Johnny by a *coup-de-main*, but were forced to fall back from the De Lacy fortress as practically impregnable. They retired to take counsel, and the barefooted boy, who had been close to them all the time, also retired to inform Johnny of their movements.

Ned and Tom found themselves at fault. They knew nothing of the country they were in. Their racing talk, which found a ready response over most of Ireland, here was not even understood. The men

they had met on the journey, and with whom they entered into conversation, although civil enough, had a way of relapsing into voluble Irish amongst themselves, in which unknown tongue the two friends felt they were being sized up and discussed.

They recognised that coercion would be impossible in dealing with Johnny, that any success must depend on diplomacy, and here again they were at fault. They knew Johnny for a cheery little blackguard, with a great understanding of a horse and little to learn as a steeplechase rider, who had never, in their experience, turned back from any piece of racing ruffianism, and as such they knew how to approach him; but they did not understand that here in his own country Johnny paid his dues and acted to the best of his abilities up to the *rôle* of a decent man, and what they could never have understood was his feeling of personal loyalty to James de Lacy.

In their way of life few men make friends. Ned and Tom were at the moment working together on perfectly good terms, but each knew the other would get the better of him if occasion offered.

They trusted no man. Perhaps they trusted some woman —a mother or a sweetheart, —for woman looms large in Irish life; but their way of life was so strenuous, that they had come to believe that to have your hand against every man and every man's hand against you was the natural condition of existence.

They were agreed now that Johnny was to be propitiated; so, when he advanced towards them, they held out their hands and wreathed their faces in smiles, and told him that it was damned pleasant to meet an old friend again. They took him to their private room at the pub, they plied him with liquor, and, as the evening wore on, Johnny's tongue seemed loosened. He told them of his position at Doon, or what he wished them to think it was, and gave them to believe that he was tired of it, and would be glad to have a turn again at the old game. And then, after another drink, he began to talk of the horses, and the conversation was carried on in whispers: the conspirators learned from Johnny, who was rapidly showing signs of intoxication, that "Climbing Boy" was better than ever."

"And 'Lomax'?" they whispered.

"He is a grand horse," said Johnny, helping himself to another drink. "He is all we thought of him and more."

"Did you try him?" they whispered.

"We did."

"And did he beat the old horse?"

"Bedad, you may say that," replied Johnny, rolling the lie round his mouth like a glass of good wine.

The others were silent for a bit, and then—

"Is it the truth you're telling us, Johnny?" they asked.

"What else would it be?" asked Johnny with drunken umbrage.

"Ah, now, Johnny, don't be angry," they answered in wheedling tones; "sure you know yourself we have to make certain. Take another drink."

"I will," said Johnny; "and since you don't believe me, be damned, but you can see for yourselves." He dropped his voice again. "We are having another trial the day after to-morrow, in the morning early. Trust me and you will see it," and he swung out of the room the picture of a man whose honour had been unworthily impugned.

In the dark outside he steadied himself against a wall.

"Bad cess to the drink," he said, "it has me destroyed, but I think I have them the way I want to!"

Next morning the lad who looked after the horses with Johnny was sent to the other side of Ireland to bring back a horse James had bought, Johnny saying he would do his work. All that day he worked hard and artistically, and in the evening "Lomax," adorned with a white star and a white stocking, was in the unknown colt's box, and the unknown was in "Lomax's" without a speck of white on him anywhere.

Very late that evening Ned and Tom were shown the bit of gorse where they could hide and see the trial, Johnny's last words being—

"Now, boys, I am trusting you with everything; if the boss knew that you were in it, I would be destroyed."

With the first light Johnny arrived on the ground, riding the supposed "Lomax," a lad riding "Climbing Boy." A moment later James arrived riding the real "Lomax" in his new disguise. Dismounting, he sent the lad home with him, and the two then adjusted their saddles, lifting them so that the ambushed conspirators could see that there were no weight-cloths. They also were able to look their men over—Johnny short and sturdy, James slight and rather tall. There was nothing between them, the trial was being run at even weights.

It went the way of the first. Johnny rode all he knew, and they could see that he was doing so; but the colt again showed his turn of speed, and beat him easily at the end.

Ned and Tom had to admit to each other that Johnny had acted up to his word. They thought over the matter deeply; they turned it inside out in discussion; they could see no flaw in it. The only doubt they had was if James had in his stable a better still. But here they were reassured, for on this point the visitors to the pub were quite ready to talk, although they were curiously reticent on others, and they ascertained beyond doubt that the three horses they had seen were the only ones at Doon that could by any stretch

be called race-horses. Ned and Tom did not know it, but they were hopelessly outclassed. They did not know that the dirty little girl who brought them their meals, and with whom they had such difficulty to make themselves understood, had a perfect knowledge of all they said, and repeated it faithfully. They did not know that in the early summer mornings their window was watched from the plantation opposite by the little barefooted boy, to see if they were rising early to tout, who speedily gave notice to Johnny if it were so. Nor had they any suspicion that the men who accepted their drinks of an evening were carefully coached as to what they should say; nor that when they relapsed into Irish they were as often as not commending themselves with exquisite enjoyment on the astute manner in which they were deceiving the strangers.

To complete their investigations, the two thought that they had only to make certain whether the white-legged colt could by any chance beat "Lomax," and on this point they approached Johnny with great circumspection and politeness.

"Is it that one with the white stocking?" he said, when the position was explained to him. "Sure, it is for hacking the boss has him."

"Well, that may be so," was the reply, "but he is a grand horse to look at, and you know yourself we can't go back to the rest of the boys without being certain sure. Would you let us see him gallop? See here now, would you let Tom here ride him one morning and you to ride the old horse? We would know what he was then for sure."

Johnny relapsed into deep thought.

"I think I can do it," he said at last. "The boss is going away this evening, and we can have it to-morrow morning. We must have it with the first light. But see here, lads, it's time you were out of this. The people want to know who you are and what you are in it for at all, and they are cross people when they are riz. They are asking me at the House what I am doing with you at all, and although we are old friends and I have nature for ye, this is no place for you to be."

"We will go to-morrow first train after the trial," they replied.

The sequel is soon told. "Lomax's" toilet was made with exceeding care, his white star and stocking stood out prominently, and Johnny arrived with him and "Climbing Boy" on the ground when it was still almost dark. The saddles were speedily adjusted, and Tom Finnegan given a leg-up; they ran together for half the distance and then "Climbing Boy" drew away, leaving poor "Lomax" to struggle honestly but hopelessly behind him. Johnny took his rein at once and rode off, saying that if any one saw him "the boss would have him out of the place next day."

"Good-bye to you, boys, and God bless you! I have done the best I can for you," he shouted, and jogged quickly away.

"Bedad, then, if we stayed here a month we would know no more than we do," said Ned Lalor, "and we may as well be off now. We have hold of the right thing for the Galway Plate, and Johnny will let us know how things go. I put it to him that it would be well worth his while."

Time drew on towards the great event, and Johnny devoted himself whole-heartedly to the preparation of his horses. The unknown colt had little experience of crowds, and was taken to a fair to look on, and amongst the people coming from Mass on several Sundays, where he was punched in the ribs and had pipes lit under his nose by those people whose views of horseflesh was limited by one that "would be a grand warrant to go under a side-car." He was even taken as a spectator to a flapper meeting, and standing on the road, looked across the low wall at the efforts of the wretched broken-down racers that take part in these meetings; he watched with his ears pricked and then gave a slight rear and stamp on the ground, and voluntarily turned for home as if disgusted with such a miserable show.

James went abroad, and returned with news of the racing, and of what he considered the real form of the horses they would have to meet. The subject grew more engrossing every day—but Johnny allowed himself one day off.

Mr Burke, Mary's father, had a score of black Pollies—Pole Angus cattle—on the mountain for the summer near Letterfrack, and thought he would like to see them and take a walk through a fair at that place at the same time, to observe how things were going and if he could buy a few more to add to their number. Mary made some excuse for accompanying him, and the old man being really fond of her and glad of her company, took her along. "Journeys end in lovers' meeting"—and Johnny was there before her.

The girl was delighted to see the improvement that the regular and quiet life had made in him. She noted that the red had departed from his nose and established itself in his cheeks in a way that was becoming, and that his eye was clear and bright; and with her eye for dress, she was astonished at the smartness of his attire and his cleanliness, and noticed also that his language had adopted some small modicum of the refinement of the people he lived amongst.

She complimented him on his appearance, telling him that she did not "know him when first she seen him, and thought he was a gintleman," and she begged him almost tearfully to persevere in the good way he was going. Mary knew James de Lacy by sight, and admired his grave, handsome young face and sweet smile, and had a good deal to ask about him, and about old

Mrs de Lacy, whom she had heard of, and who she had been told was the daughter of a Lord, and one of the old stock. And Johnny told her everything except about the horses, of which he told her nothing; but he said that he was trusting to Mr de Lacy, and that if things went the way they wanted them he might soon be a better man than he ever was, and then ——, and the two looked each other honestly in the face and laughed happily.

Mr Burke encountered Johnny at the fair and noted the improvement in him, saw "that there was no sign of drink on him at all," and was impressed; and as he and Mary jogged home slowly he said from his side of the car that he had never seen that Johnny Deery "looking as good as he was to-day," and that if he held on as he was doing "he might make a decent lad yet." Irish daughters of Mary's class are not demonstrative, but it was with difficulty that she restrained herself from leaning across the car and hugging her old father for those words.

James journeyed up to Dublin for Baldoyle, and at Kildare Street Club he met his old friend Sir Murcheson Brown, who greeted him heartily.

Sir Murcheson was a bachelor, no longer young, who in the days of his youth had been a M.F.H. in Ireland, where he had shown excellent sport and made many friends, and he loved an occasional visit to the country. He raced with some success, confining himself almost entirely to steeplechasing; he now had set his heart on winning the Galway Plate, and had brought over his horse "George's Pride," with a reasonable hope of taking back the much-coveted prize.

"Well, Jimmy," he said, "I see you are up against me, three horses, no less, in, and training yourself, I hear. Are you going to beat me, Jimmy? for, honestly, after what I have seen here I don't see what can do it unless you have something up your sleeve."

"I shall try to, anyhow," said James with a laugh. "It will not be my fault if I don't."

"That's right, that's right," said the other, and they joined in the general conversation in the hall.

. . . . . .

A blazing August day and a long line of white limestone dust, reaching from the old town of Galway to the racecourse at Ballybrit, proclaimed the earlier hours of the first day of the Galway Races. All along that two miles, cars, carriages, motors, flowed in an unending stream, going out at the jog, coming back at the gallop for the next load. Every conceivable shandrydan was on the road, vehicles that made their appearance for these two days only in the year, and came out held together by rope a shade less rotten than they were. Some of them carried coats of arms and coronets that spoke of better days, but they bore their

reverses with the true sporting air of "going whilst you can stand up." Harness gathered from Heaven knows where, and put on with an incongruity that was almost picturesque, the deficiencies freely helped by rope. And in these vehicles sat contented smiling passengers out to enjoy themselves, and determined whatever happened to do so. On them all the fine grey dust fell steadily and indiscriminately, whitening moustaches, making hair look as if it were powdered—above all, provoking a splendid thirst. Most of the people were old hands at racing. On that blazing day they had put scarves round their necks and ample waterproofs round their bodies, whilst their hats were hidden away in the wells of the cars, which generally also contained bottles of champagne, bottles of whisky, syphons of soda, so that when once arrived at the stand which looked out on the bay glittering in the sunlight, they shed their dust, slaked their thirst, and made their entry to the enclosure as spick and span as need be.

The crowd was great, and quivered with the question—What would win the Plate? Not a horse entered but had had its chances discussed for the previous fortnight. The race had been talked over in trains, the porters at the stations had forgotten their tips in arguing out the points with any one they thought likely to be in the know. The men in the shops whispered a request for a tip for the Plate as they sold across the counter. The subject even penetrated to the halls of Justice, and a farmer, who for being drunk and riotous and assaulting the police was suitably fined, produced the money with a "Well, gentlemen, it's a lot of money, but there it is"—then scanning the bench and recognising on it a magistrate of well-known sporting proclivities, added—"but, anyhow, Mr Harry, you will give me the straight tip for the Galway Plate?"

But as the hour approached, the dictum that was sorrowfully arrived at was that they did not see what was to stop the English horse.

That was the position accepted sadly as the inevitable by those best qualified to judge, but the Connemara Contingent, who knew nothing about racing, had their "trust in Mr de Lacy." They knew nothing of horses, but they knew this particular man, and their confidence in him was unshaken.

"Master James," said old Thady Connor, the steward at Doon, a few days previously, "the people are trusting in you, and they're saying you have three horses in the race, and sure your honour will tell them which one will win?"

"I don't know, Thady," said James, "that any of them will win, but I mean to try my best, and the one I shall try to win with will be the one I ride myself. You must wait till the day to see which that is."

"Thank your honour," said old Thady in the sad, melan-

cholly voice so common on the Atlantic seaboard. And the word was passed to watch Mr James on the day of the race, and the horse he rode "would beat anything in Ireland or in England ather."

The racing was good in the earlier part of the day, but at every pause between the races the bookies would be heard uplifting their voices: "Here I am betting on the Galway Plate." The time for *the* race came at last. The horses were mostly in the saddling enclosure. Sir Murcheson Brown stood beside "George's Pride," whose coat shone like satin, a magnificent horse, trained to the hour. The de Lacy horses filed in, and by their side walked four Connemara men with blackthorn sticks, mountainny men as they are called by the dwellers in the plains, and it may be noted that the same term was applied to their ancestors five hundred years ago in the records of the old town of Galway.

They had hung round the horses' stables all the morning, chattering softly in Irish. They were there on business, and were intent on it. "Climbing Boy" led the lot, looking on the scene with perfect understanding; he was followed by "Lomax," lastly came the Unknown. If any one had ever doubted Johnny's ability to train a horse such doubts must have been set at rest now. All that man could do had been done to bring them to the post at their best, and they were fit to run for their lives. They formed a beautiful trio, and the crowd clustered on the rails by them.

Johnny's old associates were there, and noted their appearance with approval; they stood to win on "Lomax," and had backed their own mare "Sweet Annie" for a place — they trusted in Johnny for that.

The unknown colt looked round on the unwonted scene; his ears were pricked, he knew that something was expected of him, and in his honest simple mind there was no thought but to do his best; but he did not understand, and the situation was nerve-straining. He rubbed his nose on the waistcoat of the lad who led him to reassure himself, and he felt much better when a silver-haired lady, whom he knew very well, came and patted him on the nose and spoke soft words of comfort to him.

The board had gone up, but the names of the riders of the de Lacy horses had been omitted, and now it was lowered again for correction.

A slight, pleasant-looking man, with a short pointed beard, came to the rails and nodded quietly to James. It was his friend Pat de Visme, and the nod meant that the stable money was on. James passed the nod on to Johnny, who mounted "Climbing Boy" and rode out, the Unknown lifting up his head and neighing forlornly as his friend disappeared in the crowd. James then lightly mounted the "Unknown"; as he did so a subdued cheer went up, and there was a race for the line of bookies. He and "Lomax"

went out, leaving Johnny's old gang to realise gradually how completely they had been had. The Unknown was being rapidly backed with ever-shortening odds, and as the colt joined his friend "Climbing Boy" outside his name was being roared from a score of lusty throats in the ring, where he shared the honours with "George's Pride": "Here I lay 2 to 1 'George's Pride'—7 to 1 Unknown—5 to 2 'George's Pride'—5 to 1 Unknown—3 to 1 'George's Pride'—4 to 1 Unknown"; and the flag fell!

Amid the rush of that fast-run race, the jostling, the clatter of hoofs around him, the colt saw his friend "Climbing Boy" in front, and felt that James, the rider he knew so well, was guiding him carefully so that he should take no harm, and his confidence returned. He knew instinctively that this was the meaning of it all—of the preparation, of the gallops which each day had become more of a joy and a delight to him. The lust for victory surged through his splendid strain of blood; he felt ready to race with any horse there, and feared none of them. "Climbing Boy" led him over the regulation fence and then dropped back beside him. The pace was hot even for that race, said to be the fastest run steeplechase in the world, and he and "Climbing Boy" came down the hill and up again, and through the lane of howling, shouting men and women, past the stand and paddock, and on out into the country again.

There was more room now; there had been some tailing off and a couple of falls, and one of the loose horses was continuing the race on his own. Together they negotiated the drop-fence, came safely down the hill, and to the "regulation" again. There were two more falls here, "Climbing Boy" dropped back, unable to live the pace, and the colt found himself for a moment alone in front, thinking the trial was over, and that he would now be pulled up; but he felt the hot breath of another horse, as "George's Pride" came up beside him. Then he knew that the great game was only just beginning, and he took hold of his bit, full of determination to win and defiance of his adversary. The shout that went up from the stand when it was seen that the race was between these two died down into perfect silence as they came racing down the hill. Up the hill weight told—the colt had the better of it, and came into the straight with a lead. "George's Pride" drew up to him, but the colt, showing his magnificent turn of speed, shook off the challenge, and a roar went up that the Galway horse had won. But the staunch, experienced, perfectly-trained English horse was by no means done with; he came again, and inch by inch drew up along the failing colt. He was at his tail, at his girths; his rider raised his whip for a final effort, and thereby made the only mistake in an otherwise beautifully-ridden race;

for "George's Pride" dreaded punishment — indeed, he had once been shamefully flogged home by a drunken jockey. He threw up his head, as horses will do who fear the whip, the impetus of his rush was lost, and the colt struggled past the post half a length to the good, whilst, five lengths off, "Climbing Boy," exhausted, beaten, but still running gamely on, challenged "Sweet Annie" for the third place, and just got his nose in front.

James received an ovation that will be a golden memory to him as long as he lives. When he came out of the dressing-room he found his friend, his adversary, Sir Murcheson, waiting for him. To lose the Plate that he came so near winning was a bitter disappointment to him, and he had backed his horse for a sum that even he felt; but he took it all like the sportsman and gentleman he was. His perfectly-made brown check suit sat him as easily as ever, and his long cigar was at the requisite angle.

"Well, Jimmy," he said, "it was a great race, and you beat me fair and square; but what chance has a poor Saxon against you mountainny men, who train your horses round a bog hole by moonlight? More by token, I'm coming to see how you do it! Your mother has asked me to. I met her here, changed, but handsome still;" and Sir Murcheson looked at James's slight active figure and handsome, clean-cut face a little lingeringly, a little wistfully.

Then a shout of battle rose from outside, in which Johnny's voice was distinctly audible. In the exuberance of his triumph he had ventured outside the enclosure to receive the congratulations of his friends, and had been set upon by his old gang, who had vowed vengeance against him. Johnny had that accomplishment, so rare amongst Irishmen of his class, of being able to use his fists, learned from James in many a strenuous bout in the saddle-room at Doon, and he landed Ned Lalor a left-hander straight on the jaw, that made that worthy sit down and wonder what had happened to him; but at the same time he received a blow of a stick on the back of his head from which the blood was flowing and which dazed him. Mary Burke had followed him out, and darted to his side, deftly warding off a murderous blow of a stick aimed at Johnny's temple. Mary's costume for the Galway races had given her a great deal of thought, and she really was dressed with much taste, but at that moment she would have given all the finery she loved so well to be standing in her nail-studded shoes and red petticoat, with a stone in a stocking, ready for the fray.

When James heard Johnny's shout he darted to the rescue, but quick as he was the four mountainny men were running in front of him, and spitting on their hands as they grasped their blackthorns, they rushed into the fray without pause. Adherents appeared on both sides, and it looked the making

of a pretty row, but a strong force of police appeared, and quickly and dexterously separated the combatants. Johnny was led back to the enclosure, and the gang drew off, cursing, snarling, defeated.

The Galway Plate made a man of Johnny, and he speedily concluded the purchase of a farm that he had had his eye on for some time. And in due course the farm was exhaustively and scientifically "walked" by Mary's father. The inspection being found satisfactory, the match-making followed, and was conducted with full ceremony, formality, and etiquette, and when at last completed, Mr Burke brought his glass down on the table and said—

"Now, Johnny, you have the girl, and, be me soul, there is not a better in Connaught. I may say that when I first heard it was you she wanted I was not too pleased at all; but I think you will do now, and I see the young gentleman above is a good friend. Folly him, and you will take no harm," and the old man stopped short, and had to hide his feelings "with a blast of the pipe," for he loved his daughter, and the prospect of home without her seemed a lonely one.

Mr Burke was introduced to old Mrs de Lacy—an introduction that he acknowledged by making a leg in the 18th-century style, and bringing his hat almost to his knee. She showed him round the garden, and each appraised the other. "A decent man," said the old lady to her son afterwards. "I'm glad Johnny is marrying amongst such people."

"The old stock, the old stock," said Mr Burke, as he walked away, and nodded his head three times, to signify that he and his hearers understood all that term meant.

The tale is told.

James's business increased; it took him frequently from home, and then Johnny would come across from his farm and see that the young horses were all right. On such occasions he somehow often happened to meet old Mrs de Lacy as she took her morning walk to the garden. He accompanies her to the gate, through the bars of which, as a little boy, he had often looked as into a forbidden paradise. He is invited to enter, and does so, raising his hat the while, and for the next hour or so the pair may be seen —Johnny gardening, under the old lady's directions, to the accompaniment of a continual and pleasant flow of conversation: and I understand the story oftenest told is one both know so well, that when one tells it, and omits the smallest detail, the other immediately supplies the omission—a story that both love to hear and tell, of how Master Jimmy, on the Unknown Colt that he had tried and trained himself, beat the great English horse and won the Galway Plate.

A BOMBING STUNT, AND AFTERWARDS.

I.

AFTER a little warm tea and biscuits in the Mess, we stroll on to the aerodrome, and the machines take off. Ours is the only two-seater, and my job is chiefly as gunner. We anticipate some trouble before we return—and we get it.

The rendezvous is over the aerodrome at 6000 feet. At this height we form up six machines, and at a signal from our leader head for the lines. I settle down comfortably and take in the glorious panoramas open to our gaze. Many have attempted to describe the beauties of earth as seen from a mile or two above it. It surely is indescribable in its grandeur. The country in this part of Macedonia is wonderful. As I look towards the Beles Dagh, the 7000-feet range that rises like a wall from the shores of Lake Doiran to the Struma Valley, the morning sun just rising tips the whole of this ridge with a delicate pink. The lake itself comes shortly into view and reflects in its depths the beauties of the mountains and the early morning sky. We have now climbed a bit and I can distinguish the line of the sea very faintly many miles away. In the same direction Mount Olympus rises big and mighty. It is obvious why Olympus should be chosen as the seat of the gods. I have seen it from near and far and all directions, and, although only some 9000 feet high, it always looks ethereal and its summits seem to soar high above the reach of mortals. What would the gods think could they look out on this troubled land now—or do they still "sit beside their nectar, careless of mankind?"

We pass high over a "Sausage," and I think more of business and less of the panorama. We are now passing over the trenches. There is very little shelling. Some of our heavies are tickling the Bulgar up a bit on the Pip ridge, a wonderfully fortified position. A Hun field battery is firing at our trenches near the Jumeaux Ravine. I spot his flashes and mark down his position for a little return hate when I get back. I never pass over the Jumeaux Ravine without thinking of that ghastly night when it ran red with English and Bulgar blood. Many a man who roamed as a boy the quiet lanes of the West Country and spoke its soft accent has found a grave in those Serbian hills just below.

"Wouf, wouf, wouf!" Archie raps out furiously. The Bulgar hates our bomb raids, and has collected a formidable group of Archies on this part of the front; and he makes very good shooting with them.

"Wouf!"—a deafening crash, and the old bus shakes violently as I put my head into the

office. Tommy—my pilot—turns to laugh. That was a near shave, but our only injury is a tear in one of the lower planes. Archie gets unpleasant when you have bombs aboard. Suddenly Archie ceases. I look quickly round, and there, coming at us from out the sun, are four Huns. Three of our machines, which are scouts and form the escort, spot them too and turn to meet them. Our leader goes straight ahead and we follow, leaving our escort, who are much faster, to drive off the Huns and catch us up. Aerial fighting is always difficult to follow, and as we drew farther away I could not distinguish what was happening. Plenty of lead was being pumped from the guns, and the Hun tracer-bullets, with their thick trail of smoke, were much in evidence. I looked around and saw a large formation of machines like flies in the distance, and scented them as Huns. We could only hope they did not spot us.

Meanwhile we are passing over an aerodrome, and machines are taking off in all directions, climbing rapidly towards us. Our objective is still miles away. There is no sign of our escort returning, and our position begins to look a bit sticky. Every mile seems endless, and we drag along like an exhausted motor-lorry. At long-last I sight our objective—a very important H.Q. At the same time two of our escort appear—the other has had to return owing to engine failure. The first machine drops its bombs and turns for home. The second is slightly in advance of us and a bit higher. I look up as it gets over the objective, and see its last big "pill" start on its journey. It is curious to watch a bomb rush past you. It looks so harmless—like a piece of scrap-iron falling off a roof. A second or two later a great spurt of red smoke and *débris* goes up into the air as the bomb finds its mark, and a few more names are added to the enemy casualty lists. We turn to unload our pills, and I spot a Hun scout about 800 feet under our tail. I long to have a pot at him, but cannot afford to squander ammunition. Our bombs dropped, we start for home, and as we do so I see a squadron of six fast Hun scouts—our old friends the flies on the horizon—diving towards us. The only machine behind us is one of our own scouts. The other scout, having finished his ammunition in a scrap on his own with two Huns, is now with the other two bombers slightly ahead of us.

I swing my gun on to the foremost of the Huns, waiting for him to come within effective range. At the same time our scout has spotted the machine that I mentioned was climbing on our tail, and dives on him. As he does so the six Huns dive on him. He must have been killed almost instantly, for he started to spin and went crashing to the earth below—one of the best of pilots and men. I fire on the Huns, and must have

hit the leader in a vital spot, for he falls steeply and goes crashing down out of control. The remaining five turn sharply on to our bus, and attack ere I have time to change my drum. The racket is awful. Eight machine-guns are pumping lead at us from short range. I can hear the bullets hissing past and spitting about the machine like hailstones.

I opened fire almost as soon as they did, but the first of their bullets got me in the stomach, and doubled me up in the cockpit. I bob up again, feeling a bit muzzy, and carry on firing. I turn quickly to Tommy to get him to swerve a bit to unmask a Hun who has come right up to our tail. But poor old Tommy is sitting back with a face white as death and his eyes closed. I think he has gone West, and so perforce turn to fight it out. The old machine flies straight ahead steadily and evenly, so that I have a steady aim. My left hand is now shot off the gun and begins to spurt blood. It has stopped an explosive bullet. This rather handicaps me in changing drums. In the next burst I am lucky enough to smite another Hun in a nasty spot, for he goes down out of control, and, as was confirmed afterwards, crashes. In the fighting which follows, yet another Hun goes down in a vertical nose-dive; whether he has been badly hit or merely had enough, I do not know, but anyway he is one the less. Another bullet explodes with a crash on my machine-gun, and sends its pieces into my chin, which bleeds profusely. I hesitate to put my hand up for fear my chin should come away. The remaining Hun machines are now doing better shooting, and my gun is put out of action with three bullets, one of which smashes the gas cylinder. I turn again to Tommy, but he is still oblivious of his surroundings. I am feeling a bit dazed by this time. My hand and face are still bleeding. What happened within the next minute or two I do not quite remember. Either Tommy fell on to the joy-stick or else he went down intentionally. Anyway the next clear vision I have is of some Hun horse lines not a hundred feet below. A Bulgar or Hun soldier near by gets a colossal wind up at sight of us diving on him, and hares down the side of the field in great style. Forgetting that my gun has gone I turn it on to him. Then I realise how hopeless our position is. There seems nothing for it but to bump placidly down among the horses. I picture our announcement in the casualty lists as wounded and missing. I already see ourselves convalescing at Sofia, and hope the Bulgars will let us go about the city on parole. These confused thoughts rush through my mind as I turn to Tommy, who is dazedly conscious now. I ask him if he is going to land, and I look around for a more or less clear spot. Suddenly, however, the engine takes on a less doleful sound; it has been

spluttering and coughing up to this, and the hope which springs eternal surges through our beings again. Then I witness a wonderful struggle of British grit and courage. With a bullet through his back, paralysed down the left side and barely conscious through loss of blood, Tommy controls that machine through a murderous fire from the ground. In a series of zigzags we struggle towards the lines, nearly fifteen miles away. To my joy I recognised the ruins of M——r in the distance. This town is just behind our lines. On we go. Then with a prayer of thanksgiving on my lips and wild joy in my heart we pass slowly over the enemy trenches. Nothing seems to matter now. Despite the guns that are trained on to us we go steadily on. As we cross No Man's Land and pass our own trenches I give vent to my joy in a blood-soaked cheer, at which Tommy smiles broadly. I think he is going to land in the first available field, but he keeps dead ahead and eventually makes a perfect landing on our aerodrome twelve miles farther away.

I scramble out of the machine and fall into the welcome arms of two Italian tommies, one of whom supplies me with a badly squashed cigarette from the depths of his breeches pocket. Tommy is lifted out and we are laid side by side smoking contentedly.

II.

A kindly French M.O. arrived on the scene and gave us a rough dressing. He looked glum at sight of Tommy's wound, and I heard afterwards that they did not expect him to live. Meanwhile the other machines had landed, most of them badly shot about. After what seemed hours an ambulance arrived and took us on to the French C.C.S. at Florina. Never shall I forget the journey over those broken Serbian roads. The heat was now intense, and the flies began to swarm. The pain that Tommy had to bear on his broken back with each jolt of the car, which went at a snail's pace, was awful. A French surgeon met us half-way with morphia—blessed morphia!—and thence the journey was better. We passed little groups of men on the march—Serbs and Italians and columns of transport. Now and again we caught arresting glimpses of wooded mountains and fields of dying poppies.

At Florina we received immediate attention, and got between clean sheets. During the week we had in this clearing station we received many visits and messages of congratulation from our friends. General Sarrail and the French Minister of Health came to see us. The officer commanding the French Flying Corps paid us constant visits and was very kind to us. These visits did much to help

us forget pain. But how we longed for a white-capped nurse! Alas! our orderlies were Annamites from far-off China, and my French often failed miserably when I asked them to get me anything. And then that night orderly! I wish I could say he stuck to his post all night. I am afraid he did not. I suspect strongly that he went back to bed after reporting at night. I could never get hold of him. The day orderly I managed to offend in some way. I asked him to get me some water. He chose to construe my French idea of this sentence into an accusation of theft, and he became threatening and hostile. My explanations made matters worse, and for the rest of our acquaintance I went in fear of him. I used to drop into troubled slumber only to dream that innumerable Huns were diving on me, and as they came nearer they were transformed into grinning faces of Annamites with their cruel slits of eyes. Oh, those nights of clammy heat!

In a bed near mine was a French captain with two bullets in his stomach. I was told he was past hope. He was in a terrible condition, and had been lying there for nearly two months, as he could not be moved. He was riding to a camp when he was attacked by some brigands or comitadjis, whose object was the theft of his horse. Some of them were caught, and a punishment such as they could appreciate was meted out to them. The cheerful patience with which that captain bore his tortures awaiting the end was wonderful. Some one had presented him with a bottle of champagne. Apparently he was forbidden or unable to drink this, and insisted that Tommy and I should drink his health in it. That afternoon B. and L. came in to see us, and we split the champagne with them. However, my palate was stronger than my stomach. That evening I developed malaria, and Tommy followed suit. The fever dogged our paths for the next two months, and when I think of the heat and the flies and the mosquitoes, my memories of Macedonia are not too pleasant. The morning after we went into hospital the gentle Hun did two bomb raids on Florina. One bomb dropped very near the hospital, and it was with mingled feelings that I saw a great spurt of *débris* go into the air as I looked through the window. A sudden rattle of machine-guns announced the fact that our people were up, and a little later we heard the great news that three of the Hun machines — all two-seaters — had been shot down in our lines, and that three or four of the wounded survivors were on their way to the hospital.

Meanwhile some victims of the raid—all civilians except one Greek soldier — were brought to the hospital. An old Greek woman, who was swathed in black, had evidently lost some one dear to her. She emitted a most

creepy sort of wail and rushed to and fro under my window most of the day, refusing to be comforted. When the Huns arrived, two of them were placed one on either side of the French captain. The others went to another part of the building. Of these two, the elder, an Oberleutnant, died the next night. The younger one, who was about nineteen, and who told me he had not been flying long, was burnt about the head and knocked about a bit from his crash. He had been shot down by B. When B. came along to see us, he brought an explosive bullet which had been taken from this fellow's machine-gun. Armed with this, I told our Hun friend that I had been wounded by an explosive bullet. He denied that they used them, and when I produced this one from his machine, he became uneasy and explained that his mechanic must have put them there without his knowledge. He was obviously frightened, and I played on his fear by telling him that he was liable to be shot for being found with ammunition forbidden by all laws of civilisation. This bit of information made quite an impression on him. He was moved to the Base next day, and although I assured him before he went that he would be well treated, he was still scared, and I am sure heartily repentant of ever having seen an explosive bullet.

I shall never forget the night before we left. We were both pretty bad, thoroughly exhausted by the flies and the damp heat. The Macedonian fly in midsummer is at his worst. The whole room was black with them, and they start to buzz around at dawn. They specially choose sick victims. Their *modus operandi* is to settle in swarms on every sensitive part of your body. Your job is then to pick them off. It is useless to wave your arms about—nothing short of actually pulling them off with your hands is good enough. When septic wounds are being dressed, Mr Fly, who likes to share a find, brings up whole battalions of his pals from the kitchens. These batten on you as an aperitif before being served up with your beafsteak later. We got a certain amount of relief from mosquito nets, but these were terribly stuffy to sleep under in the daytime. Somehow a few stray flies get under the net and torture you so to let them out that you suddenly fling off the net in disgust and give yourself over to the whole of them.

Very early the next morning we bade farewell to our hospital friends at Florina. The ambulance journey to the railhead, a distance of some miles, was fraught with pain. This road winds along at the foot of a minor wooded mountain at whose foot also Florina is charmingly situated. As we passed through its cobbled streets, native women dressed in wondrous colours glanced casually into the ambulance. The town itself is a quaint mixture of European and Turkish, an occasional mud-hut shouldering up against a

passable imitation of a London suburban villa.

Arrived at the station round about 6 A.M., we were told we could not make Salonika that day, but must journey to another French hospital at a place called Exisoo, only twenty odd miles away. This journey we made on the bottom of a cattle-truck, together with some wounded Senegalese. The Serbian driver had a penchant for shunting. He gathered speed down a slope and then suddenly put on all brakes, thereby causing us to play a form of draughts, the stretchers trying to jump one another in all directions. This did not agree with Tommy's fractured back, and the end of the journey found him on his last legs. It was midday before we got off that train at Exisoo. Some more of our Chinese friends were acting as orderlies. This hospital was a delightful place, for the marquees were arranged in an ingenious way that stopped any flies from getting in. They also gave us some iced drinks, and we felt we had struck oil. Our stay here was, however, short. The surgeon informed me that an operation at once was imperative, and that Tommy could not think of making the journey to Salonika. He further stated that their operating tents had been burnt down the previous day, and we should have to move on somewhere else immediately. He then bethought him of an English hospital with the Serbian army some distance away, and telephoned them to send an ambulance to fetch us. This arrived about 8 P.M. with an R.A.M.C. officer, Captain R., aboard. How happy we were to see him and hear good plain English once more! We were moved off again (poor old Tommy). It was very cold now at night, and as we occasionally bent round the road we had glimpses of the clear cold stars reflected in a still cold lake. To hear the orderlies speaking English when we arrived was a tonic. And then a white-capped sister to tend us through the night. We who had hardly seen an English woman for a whole year! And now here was one who was going to nurse us back to health. It seemed too wonderful. I dropped into peaceful sleep that night with the sister's voice running like cooling water through my fevered brain, and for the first time failed to have nightmares about brother Hun. I was awakened soon after dawn for my journey to the operating theatre, and Tommy followed me for extraction of the bullet from his back. The next six weeks spent in this hospital were awful. Nothing but the untiring and loving attention we received made them possible. For me it was a series of visits to the operating theatre; a nightmare of hot sweltering days and endless nights; torture by flies and fever and pain. Tommy, too, had repeated attacks of fever and some bad kidney trouble.

Yet, looking back on those weeks, one or two things stir me to a smile. The Serbians and English who died in the

hospital were buried every morning near by. An English bugler sounded the Last Post, as it seemed, at the very door of our marquee. When we were feeling our feeblest, each morning the mournful notes of the Last Post rang out. Occasionally we must both have wondered whether we should hear it on the morrow. . . .

Then there were the golfers. Every evening, as soon as the heat died down, doctors and nurses went out to the links that they had made around the lake. We had a glimpse of the course when we left the hospital. I can't imagine any scenery more glorious than that enclosing this course—this bit of England hedged round with wild mountains.

Our journey to Salonika was uneventful but long. We left our golfers at about 6 A.M., and, travelling in a cattle-truck fitted with twelve stretchers, we arrived at Salonika at 8 P.M. Fortunately I was on a top stretcher, and could catch good views of the country we passed through. The weather was glorious—it was autumn now,—and for the first fifty miles the blending of wooded ravines and dark mountains outlined against the blue sky, formed a picture I shall always treasure. Towards Vertekop the scenery is at its best, as the railway passes across a series of rugged ravines which were filled with trees fast crimsoning, and with multi-coloured flowers—a wonderful mixture of autumn and spring, of death and hope.

At Salonika we went to No. 28 General Hospital. How many thousands of our Salonika Forces know this place opposite Dudula! In our blue-covered beds we were carried out each day, and just lazed in the sun until he began to set behind Mount Olympus on the other side of the bay. How we enjoyed those days! And then there were three other fellows from our squadron in the same ward. W——, an observer, with a hole through his leg, caused by an explosive bullet. He had been in the hospital six months, and was a sort of mascot. G——, a pilot, with a bullet in the leg. He had been at Mons with the cavalry, and wandered on to various other fronts without ever having leave. He was cured before we left the hospital, and went back to fly again. And D——, who had a piece of Archie in the leg. D——, who looked as mild as a Hun professor, had the courage of a lion and an excellent repertoire of after-dinner stories.

Then there were two bonnie Scots from the A. and S. They had been wounded in a raid. One of them had fallen into the enemy trench and sat up to find a Bulgarian officer levelling a rifle at him. He promptly replied with his revolver. His shot killed the Bulgar, and the Bulgar's shot wounded him rather badly. He used to rehearse this feat in his sleep nightly, inviting the "boys" in a loud voice to "come on and give it 'em hot."

We had many visitors to see us, including an officer who had commanded Tommy's company in German S.W. Africa. Altogether we were very sorry when the time came for us to move on to Malta.

We were both on deck to say good-bye to Macedonia, while the hospital ship steamed out of the harbour. Tommy was now hobbling a little on crutches, and was looking much better. As we left the sun was dropping behind Olympus in a blaze of colour only seen in the Mediterranean in autumn. The charred minarets of the city, tinged almost to crimson by the sun's last rays, stretched like mighty blood-stained arms to heaven. Everywhere gaped the ruins of the disastrous fire, which destroyed most of this ancient city of many vicissitudes. As we got farther away we lost sight of the details of the place, and saw it, as I shall always recall it, lying like a pearl in the lap of its encircling blue hills.

A few delightful weeks at Malta followed. Here again we struck an excellent hospital at Tigné.

Then, at long-last, we left for Blighty in the s.s. *Ghurka*. The *Ghurka* had been mined on its previous trip, and all the wounded—mostly amputation cases—had been transferred to tugs and destroyers, in a very heavy sea, without incurring a single casualty. She had not sunk, however, and had got back to Malta, where she was patched up and took us aboard. Her engines gave in soon after we got out of harbour. We managed to crawl back into port, where she was put right again, and the following day we said good-bye to Malta for the second time. We had an excellent journey home, although, on one very dirty night, we picked up an S.O.S. from a City liner that had been torpedoed.

We arrived at Bristol early on a Sunday morning in a snow blizzard. England looked very drab and cheerless after the colour and warmth of the Mediterranean. Yet what did any of us care, for we had sunshine in our hearts.

Unfortunately, in London, Tommy and I went to different hospitals, and three weeks later, just as I was recovering from an operation, I got the news that Tommy had died of his wounds.

He was buried at Brookwood Cemetery. Far away from his native Rhodesia, but in a corner of that England for which he gave his life, he lies—a real white man. God rest his soul!

BALLAST.

ON PATROL.—VIII.

AN ADMINISTRATIVE VICTORY.

A TALE is told of a Captain bold
Of E-boat Seventy-two;
She steered to eastward—pitched and rolled, and Poulson swore at her, damp and cold,
As E-boat captains do.

And off the mouth of the German Bight,
With Borkum on the bow,
She saw the smoke of a German fleet—MIND YOUR FINGERS—SEVENTY FEET!
WE'RE IN FOR BUSINESS NOW. . . .

(For enemy ships are hard to find—
You have to take them quick;
So copy the Eastern vulture's rule, that waits for days for an Army mule—
Always ready to click.)

Out to the West from Helgoland
The big grey cruiser steered,
And the glinting rays of a rising sun flashed on funnel and mast and gun,
And—Admiral Schultz's beard.

Down the wind the E-boat came
And passed the searching screen;
Nobody guessed the boat was there, till they heard the wallop and saw the flare—
Where the pride of the fleet had been.

'Twixt white and green of dancing waves
The racing tracks were seen,
And Poulson watching them get there, cried—*Hold the crockery. Starboard side!*
For the kick of a magazine!

The escort ran and the cruisers ran
At the thought of an English snare;
Scattered and spread to left and right, to the friendly arms of the German Bight,
And left the ocean bare.

Then the coffee was spilt, the E-boat rolled
To a deuce of a shaking bang;
To the sound of the hammer of Aser-Thor, victory-song of Naval War,
The hull of the E-boat rang.

And Poulson swinging the eye-piece round,
Lifted eyebrows high,
For far aloft, when the smoke had cleared, he saw the flash of a golden beard
Against the empty sky.

"Admiral over! *Surface*, lads!
He's flying a belted sword;
Pipe the side or stern or bow, stand to attention smartly now—
Wherever he comes aboard."

The Admiral landed Cabré-wise,
And high the fountains burst—
(What is the meaning of Cabré-wise? To men of the air it signifies—
His after-end was first).

They piped the side, and still they stood
To watch him struggle and heave,
As he fought the slope of the rounded deck (for none could pull at an Admiral's neck
Without the Admiral's leave).

They took him below, and sat him down
On the edge of the Captain's bed,—
Treatment vile for a foeman caught, they gave him a bottle of Navy Port—
Fiery, dark, and red.

They landed him at a Naval Base,
With S. two-twenty D.
Supplied—a large and bearded Hun: Grosse Admirals, angry, One—
For draft to Admiraltee.

And Grosse-Admiral Schultz von Schmidt,
Graf von Hansa-Zoom,
Faded away to Donnington Hall, to an English park with a guarded wall
—To an elegant private room.

And there he paced the carpet up,
And paced the carpet down,
"Alte Himmel!"—the prisoners cried—"Some one's trod on the German pride,
And dared the Hansa frown—!"

The Admiral called for a fountain pen
And Reference Sheets[1] galore,
And silence fell on the smoking-room—for Grosse-Admiral Hansa-Zoom
Was throwing a Gage of War.

"Can I believe your Lordships mean
To stand so idly by—
When a young lieutenant of twenty-four, pleading the need of Naval War,
Shall make an Admiral fly?

Never shall I believe it true
That I should have to fall
On an icy sea with an awful spank, by the act of one of a junior rank,
I—Schultz, of Donnington Hall.

Their Lordships read—and bells were heard
That woke the echoing past;
And Scouts and messengers jumped and fled—till all was still as a world of dead
Beneath the wireless mast.

My Lords in solemn conclave drew
Behind a bolted door,
Threshing it out in full debate—"Is it a case for an Acting Rate?
Or use of Martial Law?"

At four o'clock in the afternoon,
With tea-cups clattering past,
Along the echoing Portland floor the whisper passed from door to door—
"They've settled it all at last!"

And I have the word of a lady fair
In Room Two Thousand B—
(A perfect peach, I beg to state), who typed the letter in triplicate
And passed it on to me.

---

[1] A letter-form which enables the sender to address his Seniors more abruptly than he would dare to do without its assistance.

"We find the Enemy Admiral's Note
Is based on Service Law—
That disrespect to a Flag afloat has sullied the fame of
Poulson's boat
Despite the Needs of War.

But he erred unknowing—so we shall mask
His breach of Service pomp,—
We'll make him an Admiral, D.S.B.[1] *— Acting — payless —*
biscuit free,
In lieu of lodging and Comp.

We'll rate him at once as an A.I.O.[2]
With a K.R.A. and an I.,[3]
We'll make him a deputy C.P.O.,[4] *with Rank of Admiral,*
whether or no,
And a beautiful Flag to fly.

And now when Poulson sails to war
In E-boat Seventy-two,
The boatswains pipe and the bugles blare, "*Stand to*
attention—forward there!
The Admiral's passing you!"

That is the tale as told to me
By a friend from Beatty's Fleet,
When over a glass (or even two), he swore to me that the
tale was true,
In a Tavern in Regent Street.

KLAXON.

---

[1] D.S.B. = Duty Steam Boat.
[2] A.I.O. = Admiralty Interim Order.
[3] K.R.A.I. = King's Regulations and Admiralty Instructions.
[4] C.P.O. = Chief Petty Officer.

MUSINGS WITHOUT METHOD.

JUSTICE FOR THE GERMANS AND OURSELVES—WHAT WE MUST EXACT—"WHO BREAKS PAYS"—THE STORY OF SOUTH-WEST AFRICA—MONUMENTS TO THE FALLEN—A PLASTER SHRINE IN HYDE PARK!—SIR ALFRED MORITZ MOND—THE NEW PEACE OFFENSIVE.

AFTER four sad years of German atrocities there still breathes in our midst a spirit of amiability. We are told daily that we must not exasperate our enemies. We must speak to them in the accents of kindliness, as one chivalrous foe to another. We are told that returned prisoners are commanded not to talk of the insults and tortures which have been inflicted upon them. One distinguished writer has told us that we ought to record the good deeds which have been done by the Germans. Even if they were more than they are, it is none of our business to record them. Let the Germans themselves announce the acts of mercy of which their admirers are proud. They will not—that we know well enough. The deeds which they think good and which we think good are wide as the poles apart. The man who sunk the *Lusitania* won the iron cross before he got the death which he deserved. The man who has spared an English life would assuredly be court-martialled were he discovered. The Germans have announced, officially, the achievements in which they take an obvious pleasure. They have put upon a long list the deeds of heroism which they wish to be known to all the world. They have made a solemn schedule of the churches and cathedrals which they have destroyed; they have enumerated the works of art which they have stolen; with a natural arrogance they have pointed to the vast number of clocks and watches which they have pilfered, and which now, as in 1870, have the same attraction for them as gaudy beads have for savages. They have not told us of a single cup of cold water given to an English soldier, and until they have done this it is not our business to speak.

And the principle that we ought to record the good deeds of the Germans, who have said, let evil be our good, is unsound for another reason. If we made a parade of a few benefits, we should look at the war in a wrong perspective. We are willing to believe that here and there among the millions of German soldiers one or two have been found less brutal than their companions. But it is idle to deal with a few exceptions. If we publish the truth that one man in a million was capable of a kindness, we resemble the ingenuous apologist who applauded a certain murderer because he was kind to his cats. When Williams, the artistic mur-

derer of De Quincey's ironic presentation, had slaughtered a blameless family for the fun of the thing, and was brought to justice, a confiding maid-servant confessed that had she been ill she would as lief have Williams to comfort her as any man alive. And we should but emulate the misguided maid-servant if we pretended that an act of kindness here and there dispensed made any difference to our general estimate of the German atrocities. We must be guided by the rule, not by the exception, and a false generalisation will do no more than weaken our resolve, and make our victory, when it comes, of no importance.

Then we are told by the same distinguished writer that those who have been imprisoned in Germany utter no complaint. He cites with approval the sad case of a prisoner who took what was given to him as it came, and added, "of course they did spit at you a good deal." We do not like that prisoner. He seems to us not a philosopher, but something of a coward. More than three centuries ago Sir Thomas Smith said of the English that they endured death cheerfully, but could not abide torture. Now we can imagine no torture more foul than to be spat at by a German, and we should have respected the captive soldier more highly if he had protested with all the strength that was in him against the indignity of being spat at by a Hun. There is no heroism in a futile complaisance, and he who sees no insult in being spat at perhaps deserves all the insults which are thrown at him.

What are the reasons alleged why we should take a kindly-balanced view of our adversaries? The first reason—this one is efficient—is that we must not arouse the anger of our foes. After the war, it is said, we shall have to live and deal with them, and the least said is soonest mended. Such is the opinion of a supine Government which does not want to be bothered with recrimination, and which looks forward with pride and hunger to a revival of the cheap and nasty policy of dumping. The other reason —completely fallacious — that if we hate the Germans we shall come to resemble them ourselves. Those who parade this fallacy might with equal truth pretend that the judge sitting on the bench resembled the murderer in front of him because he condemned him to death. Our just hatred of the Germans is based neither upon fear nor upon malice. It is based on the proper condemnation of a nation which is fair neither in peace nor in war, which does not understand the meaning of chivalry, which attacks women and children and prisoners and buildings and fruit-trees with an even greater animosity than it attacks the armed forces of its foes. If we did not hate the Germans for the evil deeds which they have committed, then, indeed, should we resemble the Germans, for we should approve by our silence the crimes which they have committed.

And after four years of warfare we may say without hypocrisy that our hatred of the Germans has not and cannot have anything in common with the hatred which the Germans feel for us. We hate them, as in duty bound, because they have done things unbecoming men and soldiers. They hate us because we have foiled their plot for the domination of the world. If you want proof of these simple truths, the Kaiser himself has given it. There was a time when he rewarded Herr Ernst Lissauer, the author of "The Hymn of Hate," vamped up from the fury of '48, with the Order of the Red Eagle of the Fourth Class. "We love as one, we hate as one, We have one foe, and one alone—England," sang the imitative bard, and his song was echoed by German and Englishman alike all the world over. The German soldiers sang it, no doubt, with an expressive rage. Our soldiers repeated it in a genuine spirit of mockery; and to-day the Kaiser has forgotten all about it. In the hysterical speech which he made at Krupp's works, and which is clear evidence of the declining courage of the Huns, the Kaiser asked: "Who is it who introduced terrible hatred into this war? That was the enemy." Poor man! His memory is not to be trusted. He has already forgotten the pious utterances of the miserable Lissauer, decorated with the Order of the Red Eagle of the Fourth Class, and is sure in the uncomfortable humility of defeat that it was the enemy, and the enemy alone, who began the "terrible hatred" which has embittered the war, and which will, we hope, ensure that the Germans shall not be received among civilised people for a generation or two.

No: that which we have to record is not the good deeds of the Germans — we will leave that privilege to them — but their evil deeds. Memories are short, especially the memories of Englishmen, and it is our duty to place upon record all the crimes committed by our enemies in the course of the war. They are neither few nor small, and their accurate history will keep busy a large staff of clerks for many months. When the war is over we must exact a full reparation, and we cannot do this unless we have a precise knowledge of the wickedness which must be atoned for. The Germans themselves, in the early pride of their hate and the bygone certainty of victory, collected and published many testimonies of their own wrongdoing. But what they have done is not enough. It must be patiently and industriously supplemented. We must have a full list of all the towns, cathedrals, churches, which they have wantonly destroyed. We must insist that payment be made in full for all the damage that they have done. We shall see to it that all the works of art which they have stolen shall be restored, that the furniture and watches and clocks with which they have embellished their own

hideous dwelling-places, or which they have impudently sold at auction in neutral countries, shall be generously paid for. To attain all these necessary objects, a list of Germany's good deeds would not help us. We must compile with what patience and accuracy are given us a list of Germany's bad deeds. Daily our men are being beaten and tortured in German mines, or are sent to work behind the German lines under the gun-fire of their own comrades. Germany is full of poor wretches, deported by the Huns from occupied territory in defiance alike of international law and of chivalry. These victims of medieval brutality must be traced and restored to their homes. And for all the crimes of which Germany has been guilty, full reparation shall be exacted. Wherefore our duty lies plain and simple before us: to see that our enemies, collectively and individually, shall in no way escape the consequences of their wrongdoing, to watch unceasingly for evidence which will convict them, and to leave the registering of the one or two good deeds which they have performed to the industry of their fellows.

The Germans in the whole course of the war have devised no cry more cunningly devised to hypnotise their enemies than the cry of "No annexations, no indemnities." There is a sound of idealism in the words. Those who hear them and repeat them flatter themselves that they are fighting not for any material advantage, but merely for the betterment of the world. They plume themselves on the generosity of their motives, on the love which they bear their enemies, upon those softer virtues which in the struggle confronting us lean to the side of vice. And the Germans, in sending the words, "No indemnities, no annexations" up and down the world, know precisely the effect which they will produce. The words express a principle which they hope their adversaries will adopt, which they will adopt themselves in no circumstances. We know what they did at Brest-Litovsk. They went thither with the ominous words upon their lips, and they proceeded to annex far more territory than they could ever have given, and to demand far greater indemnities than the wretched Russians could ever pay. Thus we have had our warning, and it is our own fault if we refuse to heed it.

When the Allies dictate terms of peace to Germany, they must demand in full an indemnity large enough to cover the cost of the war. For the suffering and sorrow which the Kaiser's wanton ambition has brought upon us no reparation can be made. The sorrow and the suffering will be borne heroically, so long as any one of the present generation of men survives. But there are damages which the Germans can and will, we hope, make good. Who breaks pays is a wise maxim, and it is for the Central Powers to pay the costs of all the breakages.

In war, as in law, the costs must be defrayed by the loser. Such was the opinion of Bismarck when in 1871 he exacted a huge indemnity from France, and its justice to-day cannot be disputed. To realise their own greedy hopes of conquest the Germans made war upon the civilised world; their hopes will presently be foiled, and they must be asked to pay the bill which right and necessity will present to them.

Concerning the restoration of Belgium and France there can be no two opinions. In these two harassed countries everything must be put back as it was in 1914. Upon that we are all agreed. And if the stern purpose of the Allies is explained instantly to the Germans, something of the occupied portions of France may yet be saved. The retreating German leaves behind him, as he goes, nothing but fire and ashes. Towns and villages are the victims of his baffled rage. The devastation which he has wrought during the last few weeks is well known to us all. And the only method of checking his lust of destruction is to make it clear to him that town shall be exacted for town, village for village; that, before he resumes his own occupation of money-getting, the houses of France and Belgium shall be rebuilt, that the factories which he has despoiled shall all be set at work again.

Otherwise, in one sense, he will regard himself as a conqueror, and with some excuse. He has destroyed deliberately, because he wished after the war to take advantage of his own uninjured country. While the French and the Belgians are busy putting their towns and their villages and their factories in order, he will be free, thinks he, to renew his prosperity, and to capture the trade of the world. His victors will lie helpless at his feet, and he will take pride in the reflection that, if he has been beaten in the field, he has made a complete conquest of houses and factories. Justice demands, therefore, that France and Belgium shall be handsomely restored before the Hun takes up again his favourite policy of dumping his shoddy goods upon the markets of the world.

And justice demands more than this. It demands also, as we have said, that the Germans shall pay the costs of all the combatants. Why should England, for instance, be burdened with an income-tax of ten shillings in the pound for years to come, because Germany chose to embroil Europe and Asia and America in a bloody war? And prudence, as well as justice, suggests that we should all present our bills to the Germans without mercy. If they have to pay interest upon an enormous debt, and at the same time to create a sinking fund, they will not find it easy to prepare for the next war, which is already taking shape in their minds. We have heard very much lately of the war against war, as well as of the possibility of disarmament. And here is a simple method to solve both problems. Compel

Germany to pay for this war, and she will have neither the heart nor the money to plan another.

The league of nations is a vain and baseless dream which will never come true; and none of those who dream the dream can capture its shape and meaning when he wakes up. Disarmament is a manifest impossibility. Napoleon, a far greater man than any one of those who direct the policy of the Allies, attempted to impose disarmament upon Germany, and was foiled by the energy and understanding of Scharnhorst. And where Napoleon failed we are not likely to succeed. Not though we covered the whole of Germany with a network of spies could we be sure that she was not collecting a formidable armoury of weapons. Nor have we the right to say to this or that nation, thus shall you be governed, thus shall you be armed. We have a right to say, you shall pay for the harm that you have done, you shall make good the damage which you have inflicted on the world; and by imposing these acts of justice upon the Germans, we shall prevent them most effectively from involving us in another great war, from threatening our modern civilisation with destruction, for no better reason than that they want to grab a coal-field here and there, and to add a few more to the colonies which they misgovern.

The Germans, in truth, are the sovereigns of misrule. No country which they have attempted to administrate has escaped ruin. Yet failure has not checked their ardour for colonies. Though wherever they have gone they have brought death and torture, they still clamour for their place in the sun. At the outset of the war they designed (as one reason for the universal bloodshed) to lay hands upon the whole of Africa, to enrol the natives in a German army, and to establish on either coast bases for submarines. Even now, when they cannot but know that their doom has come upon them, they are still proposing to "liberate" India and Egypt from the heavy hand of England! Do they think that the Indians and the Egyptians are as stupid as they are themselves? The Germans have "liberated" Russia, and Russia's miserable plight is concealed from nobody. Do the Indians and the Egyptians envy poor beaten Russia the boon of "liberty" conferred upon them by Germany? We think not, and the cant about Germany, the liberator, is not likely to be heard of any longer. But if there were any chance of the simplest human soul being deceived by Germany, we would only point to her treatment of her colonies, and find therein a complete argument why she should never again be entrusted with the rule of others than her own patient, disciplined citizens, who love the jack-boot and listen willingly to the clank of the sword. Wherever the

Germans have gone in Africa they have brought with them blood and disaster. Bismarck was in the right of it when he opposed the colonial policy of his countrymen. He knew that the Germans were not apt for the management of native races, and he feared the complications with other countries which would surely arise if the Germans attempted to build up an empire overseas. But the ambitions of Karl Peters and other adventurers were not to be stayed, and Germany started, in Bismarck's despite, upon her blood-stained road of Empire. The appearance of the Blue-book, then, which describes what Germany has done in South-West Africa is well-timed, and by a kind of irony the infamous Peters, who in the East played the same disgraceful part as von Trotha played in the West, died on the very day when the vile assaults upon the Hereros were published in the British press.

Karl Peters dies, lamented, we may assume, by few. An artist in cruelty, a scourge of the innocent, he was punished (formally and slightly) by his own Government. His name is still a terror in the territories which he ravaged, and is entitled to very little respect in Great Britain. Before the war broke out he was kind enough to accept, for his own purposes, the hospitality of England, and when he was repatriated he did his best to win the favour of his fellow-countrymen by a lavish abuse of the land which had sheltered him. In this invention of falsehoods he had but one rival —the ineffable Kuno Meyer. In the torturing of natives none approached him save von Trotha himself. And his death and the full exposure of von Trotha mark the end, definitely and for ever, of Germany's experiments of colonisation.

The story of South-West Africa, as it is unfolded in the Blue-book, is a story of misery and suffering. That the Germans should have chosen the Hereros for the victims of their cruelty proves what sort of men they are. For the Hereros were—alas, they are no more! —the kindliest, most amiable of men. They asked no more than to be allowed to tend their herds and to live the life of a pastoral people. And then upon their tranquillity there broke first the German missionary, then the German trader, and then von Trotha himself. Thus it has ever been —the missionary has prepared the soil for what is known as "Kultur," the trader has sown it, and the administrator, with the mailed fist, has come to reap what others had sown. The policy of the Germans was always the same—to embroil the natives in strife and to profit as much as they could from their dissensions. So they came to a peaceful country, rich in cattle and contented. They left a depopulated waste, where not a calf was to be seen, and thus they vindicated the destructive power of the All Highest, as they have since vindicated it

in France and Belgium, in Russia and Rumania.

A few years sufficed, with von Trotha's spirited policy of murder, to exterminate a whole race. The Hereros knew, years before the Russians, the full effect of Germany's liberating policy. Under von Trotha's beneficent rule a hardy population of 90,000 dwindled to a poor wan band of 15,000 starvelings, who presently died of inanition. And with the Hereros perished the herds of cattle which were their wealth and the prosperity of their country. Von Trotha went through the land like the blight of disease, sparing nothing, leaving nothing alive. He slaughtered indiscriminately men, women, and children. He was determined that nothing should survive. He made the profound discovery that if all the natives were killed, there need be no more fear of native risings, and to achieve this purpose he put an end to a race which might boast something of the dignity and simplicity of Homer's heroes.

Nor was he content with murder. He spared his victims no refinement of torture. The pictures which illustrate the Blue-book add horror upon horror. The wretched women of the Hereros were flogged to death unmercifully. The men were loaded with chains and hanged upon trees. And so far as any purpose may be said to have directed von Trotha, these crimes were committed merely for the love of the thing. Two things, we believe, are necessary to aspiring colonists—land to cultivate, men to cultivate it. Von Trotha took peculiar care to devastate the land and to kill all those who might have tilled it. What he did not do, and what none of his successors have done, was to replace the slaughtered Hereros with industrious Germans. He had won a place in the sun, and had himself inflicted the place with death and solitude.

It is commonly said that the Germans have revealed themselves during the war in a new light. This is not true. The Germans are to-day what they have always been. Had we taken the trouble to study what they had done in Africa, we should have been better prepared to meet them in Belgium four years ago. For, in truth, the Germans are unchanged and unchanging. In humanity they lag far behind the Hereros, whom they murdered; and having read the performances of von Trotha, we have no right to be surprised at the policy of *Schrecklichkeit*, which they have applied to Belgium and to northern France. But we may take warning, though we take it late; and if ever again we permit the Germans to set foot in a colony of their own, we shall be cynically conniving at murder.

There is one duty which lies far nearer to us than the superfluous recording of Germany's infrequent benefits, and that is the duty of inscribing upon imperishable brass the great deeds of our soldiers and

sailors. The heroism of these brave men shall not be unremembered in their deaths. And the greater the deed, the more modest should be the inscription, the simpler the monument. To snatch a politician from the jaws of forgetfulness a vast mass of bronze or marble is necessary, and that is why our streets and squares are made hideous by gigantic statues. Compare the rows of inexpressive effigies which fill the north transept in Westminster Abbey with the pious restraint—outraged now and again, it is true—of the Poets' Corner, and you will learn that there at any rate pomp is in inverse ratio to glory. The Greeks, whose sense of proportion was unfailing, have shown us the way to honour our illustrious dead. They solved the problem of lapidary inscription with their own sure reticence. Many pages do not suffice to explain the merits of one who has spent his life in juggling with majorities. Two lines are enough to make immortal a hero who died for his country. In this kind Simonides was supreme. He knew that noble actions ask for few words, and he stayed his hand for this side of rhetoric. "O stranger, tell the Lacedæmonians that we lie here obeying their orders." There is no more to be said. The valour of Leonidas and his companions will be thus familiar to us until the end of time.

And Simonides vaunts the deed and the purpose of the deed rather than the man. "In all the epitaphs of this class," says Mr Mackail, "the thought of the city swallows up individual feeling; for the city's sake, that she may be free and great, men offer their death as freely as their life; and the noblest end for a life spent in her service is to die in the moment of her victory. The funeral speech of Pericles dwells with all the amplitude of rhetoric on the glory of such a death; 'having died they are not dead,' are the simpler words of Simonides." If only we could take Simonides for a model in honouring our heroes it would be well. We want rhetoric neither in word nor in stone. Such monuments as we shall set up should be plain and unadorned, for the very reason that they will commemorate deeds as great as ever have been done in the world. A committee of artists should be appointed to correct their taste and to check their exuberance. And what is happening? The delicate task is confided to the hands of a Minister who is incapable, by his antecedents and his temperament, of performing it adequately.

It is the cardinal belief of our Government that all the knowledge, the taste, and the talent of the country are concentrated in the House of Commons. The accidental votes of a few perplexed and fuddled electors is said to make the man upon whom they smile ready for any enterprise. And so it comes

about that Sir Alfred Moritz Mond, the elect of Swansea, and First Commissioner of Works, is entrusted with the difficult task of commemorating publicly the men who have fallen upon the field of battle. He is the arbiter of our national taste, the controller of our public monuments. We have little confidence in his fitness for his post, and the rumours which reach us of the plans already formed fill us with apprehension. There is to be a shrine in Hyde Park, the largest of its kind that has ever been seen. It will be visible for many a mile, and it will remind every wandering eye that catches sight of it that we are expressing our emotion by the simple means of bulk. The shrine will be seventy feet long, but lest the taxpayer should be alarmed at the cost, it will atone for its size by the cheapness of its material. For if the present design be carried out it will be of plaster, and it will look very clean at first, like the White City, which, as Mr Stephen Paget has reminded us, "very soon got shabby." And this shabby shrine of seventy feet in length is to be equipped with pylons, rising forty feet from the ground, and each pylon is to be surmounted by a cone, the symbol of eternity. That is how an official honour is to be done to those who have died in the war, and we do not like the prospect. The glory of our heroes asks nothing *ære perennius*, for it would be eternal were its record merely scratched upon a wall. But plaster, apart from its unsuitability, suggests a kind of bargain. Perhaps marble was suggested, and Sir Alfred Moritz Mond was told by the Treasury that it could not afford it. But if economy be imposed upon us, we will willingly dispense with the pylons "rising forty feet from the ground"; we will not insist upon the surmounting cones, "the symbols of eternity"; we should be perfectly content to shorten by many feet the White City in miniature which is proposed. All that we want is to keep faithful to the tradition of Simonides, and we are offered a vast rhetorical excrescence in plaster.

And Sir Alfred Moritz Mond is not the right man to be entrusted with the control of monuments honouring the dead. No one of foreign blood should come between us and the men who have died for our cause. For four years we have waged a struggle of life and death with Germany, and we intend to commemorate worthily the golden deeds of those who fell by German hands. And how does our Government interpret its duty? It entrusts the delicate office to Sir Alfred Mond, who, by no fault of his own, is of German descent. It is true that he was born in England, and therefore is a British subject; it is true also that no drop of British blood flows in his veins. If you will turn to that useful book of

reference, Burke's 'Peerage and Baronetage,' you will find disclosed the lineage of Sir Alfred Mond. There is no secret about it. There it is for all to see, and it provides an interesting commentary upon the plaster shrine in Hyde Park.

Once upon a time, then, there dwelt at Ziegenhain, in Hesse-Cassel, one Baer Meyer Mond. He espoused a lady named Zerlina Weinburg, and died untimely in 1820, leaving behind him a young son, Meyer Baer Mond, of Ziegenhain, who, when he grew to man's estate, married Henrietta, youngest daughter and co-heir of Aaron Levinsohn, and of their sons only one survived, Ludwig Mond, who married his cousin, Frida, only child and heir of Adolph Meyer Löwenthal, of Cologne, and the fruit of this marriage was Sir Alfred Moritz Mond, at present His Britannic Majesty's First Commissioner of Works.

We have no doubt that the lineage here set forth is entirely to the credit of Sir Alfred Mond. But it must be admitted that Sir Alfred's ancestry does not mark him out as a pre-eminently suitable person to devise a monument to set up in honour of Englishmen. A corner of his heart cannot but be in Ziegenhain, Hesse-Cassel. He must, being human, retain some feeling of loyalty for Cologne, the residence of his grandfather, Adolph Meyer Löwenthal; and with the indelicacy and lack of humour which characterises our Government, Sir Alfred Mond is asked to discharge a duty which is obviously far beyond his compass.

Now it is possible that Sir Alfred Mond is an administrator of genius. We know nothing about him save his lineage. It is possible that our poor degenerate old country cannot be governed without the help of German blood and German bone. It is possible that we must still rely upon a statesman who, born at Farnworth and educated at Cheltenham and St John's College, Cambridge, is English in no other than a legal sense. Clear though his citizenship is, we cannot forget Ziegenhain and Cologne. After all, we are—even the best of us—shaped and formed by our ancestry. A man cannot easily forget the cradle of his race, and if it be necessary for the welfare of Great Britain that the gifts of Sir Alfred Mond should be employed in our Government, then let him be made Prime Minister or Chancellor of the Exchequer. Let him sit upon the Woolsack or direct the Board of Trade. But remove him instantly from the Commission of Works. For it is plainly an insult to our dead soldiers that the shrine in Hyde Park, or any other shrine where Englishmen are honoured, should be touched by one who, two generations ago, belonged body and soul, and still by race belongs, to Ziegenhain in Hesse-Cassel.

The Germans never flatter

us with the unexpected. No sooner do they suffer a reverse in the field than they cry aloud for peace. They change the channel through which the aspiration should pass, but the aspiration is ever the same. And their manœuvres should deceive nobody. They made war at their own time. They stage-managed the preliminaries with excellent skill. The Austrian prince was killed at the right hour and in the right place. The fierce demands of Austria were so cunningly framed that Serbia's refusal of them was a foregone conclusion. "It was our war," boasted Herr Harden: "we willed it." And when the hour strikes it will be our peace. If the Central Powers could understand that it would save them a vast deal of trouble, and would preserve our materialistic Radical press from the sad necessity of repeating, parrot-wise, that there are no terms of peace which they would not gladly consider.

The new peace offensive has been conducted on three fronts simultaneously. On the Murman Coast the Germans have been strangely magnanimous. They are ready to promise that they will not attack Eastern Karelia if the Entente troops are withdrawn from that district. This offer was the more easily made, because the Germans have no troops wherewith they could attack Eastern Karelia, even if they would. The offer made to Belgium is yet more foolish. Germany makes no promise of restoration or reparation, but if Belgium choose, she may be a neutral until the war is over, and if she persuades the Allies to restore to Germany her lost colonies, she may even enjoy some measure of political and economic independence. That suggestion is stupid enough, and the Germans have always been stupid; but it is easily surpassed by the so-called Austro-Hungarian Note, which was presented to all the powers and to the Pope simultaneously, and with a great flourish of trumpets. It bears all the marks of German manufacture. It is discursive, hypocritical, and disingenuous. It affects a love of peace, which the Austro-Hungarians severely repressed in 1914, and all the while you know that what it wants is a chance for Hindenburg to reconstruct his lines of defence and to strengthen his armies. And how is it possible that the Austrians should expect us at this late hour to believe in their good faith? An intimate acquaintance with "scraps of paper," and with the respect which Germany and Austria have shown for treaties, makes us wonder at the effrontery of those who have put forth this last attempt to rob the Entente of the fruits of victory.

What, then, were we asked to do? The Austrians invited all the world to sit round a baize-covered table and discuss. The oratory of the diplomatists was not to silence the thunder of the guns. The war might go on in the field, while the wiseacres tricked one another

about the terms of peace. Nor were the spoken words to possess a binding force. The disputants, conversing in secret, were to have been free to reject the terms offered or received, according to their will. What good the meeting could have done to the Allies, who are now finishing the war on the battlefield, where alone it can be finished, does not appear. Its advantage to the Central Powers, who want nothing so much as breathing-space, is apparent to us all.

With an hypocrisy which the Prussians must envy, Austro-Hungary deplored "the catastrophe of a suicidal continuation of the struggle." Well might she do this, as when she wrote the Note she was incapable of continuing the struggle herself, and hoped that her foes would be kind enough to desist also. She forgets by this time the havoc she wrought in Serbia, the many foul deeds which have been perpetrated, with her connivance, in Russia and Rumania, and everywhere where the armies of the Central Powers have penetrated. And so she talks complacently of catastrophes and suicides. "The opposing conceptions of individual belligerent States," she thinks, "would likewise form the subject of discussion and mutual enlightenment, as well as the general principles that shall serve as a basis of peace and the future relations of States to one another." This is the merest pedantry, and it is evident that Austria, conscious of her own defeat and discomfort, is wholly unconscious of the just anger against her and her allies which burns in the breasts of the whole Entente.

But, living in a fool's paradise, Austro-Hungary thinks that nothing is necessary save discussion. "No disadvantage," she says, "could arise therefrom for the States represented." No disadvantages for her, maybe; but for us? It would hardly profit us if, while we were discussing abstract politics with Austria, the Germans straightened out their lines and added to their store of shells and guns. As Austria has nothing to fear, so she has everything to hope from her manœuvre. "Far from being harmful," she continues, "such an exchange of views could only be useful for the cause of peace. What, the first time, does not succeed, can be repeated, and what has already been done has, perhaps, at least contributed to the clarification of views. Streams of pent-up human kindness would be released, in whose warmth everything essential would remain; and, on the other hand, much that is antagonistic and to which excessive importance is still attributed would disappear." How the diplomatist who wrote these words must have laughed as they fell upon his paper! "Streams of pent-up human kindness," indeed! He will not be asked to use much force to dam these in England or in France or in the United States. The Allies have no kindness for the Cen-

tral Powers, either pent-up or flowing in an open channel; and when the Germans and Austrians have mastered this fact, perhaps they will abstain from the writing of notes and the shedding of insincere tears. They believe it sound policy, no doubt, to affect at the eleventh hour a sympathy and a pity which they did not feel when they were putting the wretched Serbians to the edge of the sword. But they will hardly stir the interest of Lord Lansdowne, and as a poster at the coming election, for which it was composed, the Austro-Hungarian Note will fail completely.

It was Germany herself who gave the final answer to Austria's hankering after peace. On the same day on which the Note was issued to the press a passenger steamer, the Galway Castle, was torpedoed in a rough sea and without warning. There were on the ship just those persons whom the Germans delight to murder—women and children and invalid soldiers. The Germans sank the Galway Castle, and with the Galway Castle they sank also the poor little cockle-boat to which Austria had intrusted her and their hopes of deceiving the Allies. The Allies are not deceived. Nobody will join the representatives of the Central Powers at a conference. Those "pent-up streams" will not be released, and Germany and Austria will never know peace again until it is dictated to them by the victorious Entente.

Printed by William Blackwood and Sons.

BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE.

No. MCCXXXVII. NOVEMBER 1918. Vol. CCIV.

PUSHED.

BY QUEX.

VII.

8.15 P.M.: "I found that C Battery had moved off—gone towards the other side of Z——, and B and D were also on the march," explained the Colonel, when Headquarter carts and waggons—parked out for the night only half an hour before—had again got under way (taking the road between X—— and Z——) for the third time during twenty-two hours. "Division got news that the Boche was putting in two fresh Divisions, and intended to attack by moonlight," he added, "and they thought our guns were too close up to be safe; so the Brigade-Major hurried down and told the batteries to move back at once. We turn south-west from Z—— and make for Q——, and come into action there as soon as we get further news from Division. I have sent out orders to all the batteries, and they are marching to Q—— independently."

It was a radiant night. The moon rode high in a star-spangled sky; there was a glow and a sense of beauty in the air—a beauty that exalted soul and mind, and turned one's thoughts to music and loveliness and home. The dry hard roads glistened white and clean; and in the silvery light the silhouettes of men marching steadily, purposefully, took on a certain dignity that the garish sun had not allowed to be revealed.

Whether we spoke of it or not, each one of us listened expectantly for the swift-rushing scream of a high-velocity shell, or the long-drawn sough of an approaching 5·9. This main road, along which our retreating columns were winding

their slow even way, was bound to be strafed.

We rode through Z——, two days ago a Corps H.Q., deserted now save for the military police, and for odd parties of engineers, signallers, and stretcher-bearers. Then our way took us down a wide sunken road, through an undulating countryside that stretched up to remote pine-tipped hills to right and left of us. A battalion of French infantry had halted by the roadside; their voices, softer, more tuneful than those of our men, seemed in keeping with the moonlit scene; and in their long field-blue coats they somehow seemed bigger, more matured, than our foot-soldiers.

We had marched five miles when a horseman on a broad-backed black came towards us. He looked intently at every one he passed as he rode the length of our column. "Is that the Adjutant, sir?" he asked when he came level with me; and then, sure of my identity, went on, "I've got our supply waggon with me, sir—halted it at the next cross-roads. I heard the Brigade was moving, sir, and came to find the best spot to pick you up. The battery supply waggons will be passing this way in about half an hour, sir."

Keeping daily touch with your supply column is one of the fine arts of moving warfare, and the resourceful M'Donald had again proved his worth. "Refilling point, to-morrow, will be at ——, sir," he added, "and after to-morrow it will be only iron rations. Good forage to-day, sir."

11 P.M.: Brigade Headquarters had pulled into the right of the road behind A Battery, just outside a village that up to the 21st had been a sort of rest-village, well behind the lines. Army Ordnance, Army Service Corps, and battalions out of the line were the only units represented there, and a fair proportion of the civil population had re-established itself after the German retreat in the spring of 1917. Now all was abandoned again, furniture and cattle bundled out, and houses locked up in the hope that shortly the Boche would be thrust back and the village re-occupied by its rightful owners.

The Colonel had ridden forward with young Bushman to meet the Brigade-Major and to settle where the Brigade would camp. More French infantry passed, going up to the Front by the way we had come back. Twice, big lasting flares illuminated the sky over there where the fighting was—stores being burnt to prevent them falling into German hands, we concluded. Presently, Bushman came back and pointed out a particular area where Brigade Headquarters could settle down.

The small village green would do for horse lines and for parking our vehicles. I sent off the sergeant-major to scout for water-supply, and took possession of a newly-roofed barn in which the men might sleep.

There was a roomy shed for the officers' horses and a stone outhouse for the men's kitchen. Now about a billet for the Colonel!

"There's a big house at the back, sir, with an Artillery mess in it," said the sergeant-major, who had finished watering and feeding the horses. "Perhaps there's a spare room there for the Colonel."

I went round and came upon the officers of a 6-inch how. battery, who had reached the village two hours before and were finishing their evening meal. They offered me dinner, which I refused, and then a whisky, which I accepted; but there were no spare rooms. They had got away from the neighbourhood of the canal with the loss of two hows., but told me of a 9·2 battery at ——, that it had been absolutely impossible to get out. "I believe it is true that we've done very well up north," replied their Irish captain cheerfully. "Lots of prisoners at Ypres, they say. . . . Have another whisky!"

"We have one tent, haven't we?" I asked the sergeant-major when I got outside.

"Yes, sir, but there's a cottage where Meddings has put the officers' cook-house. It looks all right, and there might be something there for the Colonel."

The cottage certainly looked clean and neat from the outside, but the door was locked, and it is the rule that British troops only enter French houses with the consent of the owners. However, I climbed through the window and found two empty rooms each with bed and mattress. Times were not for picking and choosing. "We'll put the tent up," I decided, "and ask the Colonel if he cares to take one of these beds or have the tent. You and I, Bushman, will take what he doesn't want."

When I took a turn round to see if the men were comfortably settled for the night, I learnt that the skurried departure of the A.S.C. had provided them with unexampled opportunity of legitimate loot. There was one outbuilding crammed with blankets, shirts, socks, and underwear — and our men certainly rose to the occasion. Even the old wheeler chuckled when he discovered a brand-new saw and a drill. The sergeant-major fastened on to a gramophone; and that caused me for the first time to remember my Columbia graphophone that I had loaned to D Battery before I went home wounded from Zillebeke. Hang it, it must have been left behind at X——. The Germans had probably got it by now.

It was half-past twelve before the Colonel returned. "I'll have my camp-bed put up there," he said promptly, indicating an airy cart-shed, and he refused altogether to look at the empty cottage. So Bushman and I had beds made up in the tent, and then the three of us sat down to a welcome and memorable *al fresco* supper opposite our horse lines. Our table was a door balanced on a tree stump, and Meddings

provided a wonderful Lincolnshire pork-pie. He also managed hot potatoes as an extra surprise, and as it was our first set meal since 5.30 A.M. breakfast, there was a period of steady, quiet, happy munching. One cigarette, then the Colonel tucked himself up in his valise, and in three minutes was deep in his first sleep for three successive nights.

"I'll tell you what I'm going to do," I said to Bushman when we got in our tent. "I'm going to take my clothes off and put on pyjamas. You never know these days when you'll get another chance."

I had pulled off my jacket when I heard a jingling sound outside and French voices. Looking out, I saw a couple of troops of French cavalry picketing their tall leggy horses on the village green. I was just in time to rush out and prevent two troopers stabling their officers' chargers in the cart-shed where the Colonel was resting. They seemed startled when I whispered that it was "mon Colonel" who lay there, but they apologised with the politeness of their race, and I pointed out a much better stable higher up the street.

About 3 A.M. the piquet woke me to introduce an artillery officer with a Caledonian accent, who asked if I could tell him where a brigade I knew nothing at all about were quartered in the village. The next thing I remember was the Colonel's servant telling me the Colonel was up and wanted me immediately.

VIII.

5.30 A.M.: "No orders have reached me from Division yet," said the Colonel, shaving as he talked, his pocket mirror precariously poised on a six-inch nail stuck in one of the props that held up the roof of his cart-shed boudoir. "And I'm still waiting for reports from B and C that they've arrived at the positions I gave them on the orders sent out last night. I want you to go off and find the batteries. I will wait here for orders from Division. Have your breakfast first. You'll find the batteries somewhere along that contour," pointing with the little finger of the hand that held the safety razor to a 1/100,000th map on his bed.

Again I realised as I set out, followed by my groom, that the Boche had moved forward during the night. The village we had occupied at 11 P.M. was now within range of his guns. Two 5·9's dropped even at that moment within 200 yards of our horses. Moreover, I hadn't ridden far along the main street before I met some of our divisional infantry. A company commander told me that the French had come through and relieved them. His Brigadier had arrived at Q—— at 4 A.M. and was lying

down—in the white house at the corner. "The Boche gave us no rest at all last night," he went on. "He'd got two fresh divisions opposite us, and shoved up thousands of men after ten o'clock. We killed hundreds of 'em, but there was no stopping them. And aren't they hot with the machine-gun? They must have been specially trained for this sort of warfare. They snipe you at 700 yards as if the machine-gun were a rifle, and their infantry hasn't needed a barrage to prepare the way. There's so many of 'em."

I trotted on, and at the top of the street leading out of the village recognised a mounted orderly of the battery I had belonged to before coming to Brigade Headquarters. He was riding hard, but pulled up when he saw me and handed me a note, saying, "Major Bartlett sent me with this to Brigade Headquarters, sir."

I recognised the Brigade-Major's handwriting on an ordinary Army message form. It was a note stating that we were to remain in support of the French after our own divisional infantry had fallen back, but that the French Divisional General hoped to relieve our artillery by 9 A.M. We were to fire on certain points until that hour, and then withdraw to a village still farther south-west, and again co-operate with our own infantry.

"Do you know if Major Bartlett read this?" I asked.

"Yes, sir; I saw him read it."

"Is the battery in action?"

"Yes, sir; they were firing when I came away."

Good! I knew then that Major Bartlett, on his own initiative, was acting on the instructions contained in the Brigade-Major's note, and that the other batteries would not be delayed in getting into action if I sent the note direct to the Colonel.

I took the orderly another quarter of a mile along the road, so that he could point out the nearest way to Major Bartlett's battery; and then told my groom to take him direct to the Colonel, after which they would rejoin me.

I found the Major in good fettle, and, as I had guessed, blazing off at the targets given by the B.M. As also he had passed on the orders to A Battery, who were three hundred yards away, we at any rate had two batteries in action. He explained to me that the Division despatch-rider had somehow failed to find Brigade Headquarters, but had come across him. He had got his battery into position at about two o'clock, and they had dossed down beside the guns.

The Major didn't know the whereabouts of the composite battery, so I got on my horse again and searched a village that was farther south, but on the same map-contour. Judge of my relief when I encountered Fentiman, who told me C and B would be along in ten minutes. I emphasised the

need for despatch, and he told me that the previous night his battery's waggon lines had been taken back farther than they should have been; the horses being thoroughly done, they had had a proper halt at midnight. "We'll be firing in twenty minutes," he added optimistically. "I'll dash along and work out the targets with Major Bartlett."

A couple of Horse Artillery batteries had come into action a quarter of a mile behind ours, and shells began to fly in the direction of the enemy in business-like fashion. From the ridge we looked into a village that sloped up again to a thick belt of trees three thousand yards in front of us and to blue distances away on the right. Down the slopes tiny blue figures could be seen feverishly throwing up earth; parties of twenty and thirty men, khaki-clad, every now and then emerged from the wood, and in single file dipped down to the valley and came towards the village I had just left. The problem would undoubtedly be how far the retirement would proceed before French reinforcements made the line massive enough for a proper stand. The Colonel was now with the batteries, checking their lines of fire, and telling battery commanders to do their damnedest until the French Artillery came along. My groom told me that the Colonel had had a very narrow escape as he passed through Q——. A shell dropped thirty yards from him, and a splinter had wounded his mare.

8.30 A.M.: The eternal machine-guns were spluttering devilishly in the wood opposite. Our infantry were coming back in larger numbers now, and I thought glumly of what the Brigade-Major had said the previous evening, "We are going to fight for this line." The Colonel had conferred with the Colonel of the Horse Artillery, who said that his orders were to pull out at 9.15, come what may. "The Corps are particularly anxious that no more guns should be lost." The veterinary sergeant of a Horse Artillery battery had dressed the Colonel's mare, although she was too excited for him to get the splinter out. "I think she deserves to have a wound stripe up," smiled the Colonel, who was exceedingly fond of her.

9 A.M.: No signs yet of the French artillery. There seemed to be a curious lull in the fighting. Only the Boche long-range guns were firing, and their shells were going well over our heads. And no more French infantry were coming up.

9.20 A.M.: The two Horse Artillery batteries were away. Our teams and limbers had come up, all except one team of B Battery. We waited for the Colonel to give the word.

Suddenly the "chug-chug-chug" of a motor-cycle: a despatch-rider from Division! The Colonel tore open the envelope. "A Battery . . . Limber-up and retire," he

ordered; "C and D will follow."

"The French artillery has been stopped," he explained shortly. "We are going to make the stand at ——, three miles farther back."

An officer of B Battery ran across to say that through the binoculars grey forms could be seen in the belt of trees opposite.

The Colonel's eyes gleamed. "Got any ammunition left after filling up the limbers?" he asked quickly.

"Yes, sir — about fifty rounds."

"Right; give it 'em, and then pull out at once."

The officer saluted and hurried off. The Colonel lighted a cigarette and stood under a tree. "One of the most difficult things to decide upon in war," he soliloquised, "is to know the exact moment at which to retire."

The sharp crack of B's 18-pdrs. firing fifty rounds as fast as the guns could be loaded. Then silence. Still no signs of the missing team of horses. A corporal went by at the gallop to find out what had happened.

The Colonel was now on the ridge searching the trees opposite with his glasses. Five guns had been limbered up. Every other battery had gone. The battery commander looked puzzled and annoyed. "The five guns that are ready can move off," said the Colonel calmly. "An officer is to wait here until the team arrives to take away the other gun."

Even as the five guns took the road the missing team and limber came out of the village.

"The off-leader had cast a shoe, and they had to send back for the farrier, sir," reported the corporal.

"Good," observed the Colonel, "but some of you fellows will have to remember that there's a war on, and put more 'nip' into your work."

IX.

11 A.M.: It needed cool counsels and a high and steadfast faith during the next twenty-four hours. The sunken track along which our own and other British Artillery Brigades were retreating was full of ruts and choked with dust, and we thanked our stars that the weather had held. That road churned into the mud-slime to which a few hours' rain could change it, would have become impassable for wheeled traffic. But the chief trouble was that the French "75's" coming up to relieve us had had to turn and go back the same way as ourselves. For the best part of a mile both sides of the narrow roads were occupied, and only patience, forbearance, and steady command eased the block. The Boche could not be far behind, and there was just a possibility that we might be trapped with little chance of putting up a fight. It was a

lovely day again, baking hot, and the birds were singing their gayest; but most of us felt savagely doleful. "I hope it *is* a strategic retreat," said Fentiman viciously, "but we've had no letters and no papers for days, and we know Blank All of what's going on. A strategic retreat is all right, but if the fellow behind follows you close enough to keep on kicking your tail hard all the time, you may retreat farther than you intend. When the Boche retreated last year we never got close enough to kick his tail—damn him."

Two welcome diversions! The road at the point we had now reached rose to the level of the stubble-fields, and three batteries of "75's," with much "*Hue*-ing" of the horses, pulled off the track and made across the fields to another roadway. At the same time the "heavies" woke up, and the sound of the big shells grunting through the air above our heads and on towards the enemy who pursued us was *très agréable*.

When we reached the village of P—— we found two brigades of our divisional infantry already there. Trenches were being dug, and our A Battery had pulled their six guns behind the mile-long ridge that ran southward from the village. The Colonel joined our Brigadier, who was conferring with the two Infantry Brigadiers and the G.S.O.I., and as a result of this war council, C Battery was ordered to continue the march and take up a reserve position on the next ridge, two miles farther back, south of the village of O——. B and D, the composite battery, would come into action alongside A.

Telephone lines were run out from the two batteries to look-out posts on the top of the ridge 700 yards away, and the Colonel ordered firing at the rate of one round a minute. Half a dozen "75" batteries were being loosed off with what always looks like gay abandon on the part of the French gunners. Young Bushman was whisked off to inform the Staff Captain, now at O——, of the batteries' new positions, so that ammunition supply should be kept up. We then awaited developments.

The view westwards from the P—— ridge that day provided one of the most picturesque panoramas of the retreat. The centre of P——, ridded the night before of its civilian inhabitants, was chock-a-block with troops and military traffic; and the straight road that led down into the valley, across the stream, and up again to O——, was a two-mile ribbon of blue and khaki, and waggons and lorries, and camp kitchens — sometimes moving, oh, so slowly! once at a standstill for over an hour. A long way to the right high rocks and thick masses of dark trees rose, aloof; below them, thousands of horses and hundreds of supply and ammunition waggons, some halted in lines, some making slowly across the valley towards O——. Directly in front of us more horses, more waggons.

A road at the foot of the valley wound away to the left and then round behind the O—— ridge. The valley would have served admirably for a field-day in home training.

The Colonel called Major Bullivant and pointed out that the stream at the bottom was crossed by only one bridge, that which the main road ran over. "If you are relying on that bridge for a withdrawal you will certainly be cut off. You'd better cut down some trees and make a bridge directly behind your battery. Of course, there's the road round by the left, but it will be best to have another way."

1 P.M.: A cavalry officer, hot and dusty, came up and said he had hurried back because some of our artillery fire was dropping dangerously near the French infantry. The Colonel and he made a joint inspection of maps, and the cavalry officer pointed out certain spots which we still held.

"That's all right," replied the Colonel. "My batteries are not firing on that part, but I will pass word round." And he sent me to some neighbouring batteries to explain and to warn.

An infantry runner came to ask the Colonel if he would go across to see the Infantry Brigadier. "More moving," said the Colonel when he returned. "We are to fall back on O—— now. Will you get back and see that telephone wire is brought up? You know where C Battery have gone; the other batteries will come into line with them. You can keep H.Q. waggon line just behind O——."

I rode off, accompanied by Beadle of A Battery, still dressed in overcoat and pyjamas. The stream of retreating traffic on the road between P—— and O—— was thicker than ever; the centre of O—— was as packed as a Fen village during a hiring fair; the Divisional horse-master, the C.R.E., and the D.A.Q.M.G. were among the officers trying to sort out the muddle; and in front of the Mairie, like a policeman on point duty, stood a perspiring Staff Captain. "That'll mean the Military Cross at least," grinned Beadle. "Life's very hard sometimes, isn't it?"

3 P.M.: The batteries were now in position on O—— ridge, and one Brigade of the Divisional Infantry had arrived and commenced to dig. "I must have turned up half France since we started this retreat," growled one swarthy private, resting on his pick. "And I was a navvy before the war, and joined up for a change."

I stood by the composite battery and saw four of the waggons come up with ammunition. They had had to climb a long, punishing slope over meadow-lands and orchards, and the last five hundred yards was across ploughed fields. The horses were blowing hard. "They've kept their condition well, considering the work they have had to do this last four days," remarked Dumble. "I hope the Supply Column won't fail us, though. The horses

want as much corn as they can get now."

"Well, the A.S.C. have had plenty of practice getting up supplies this last three years. They ought to be able to keep touch with us, however irregular our movements—and M'Klown is a pretty smart fellow," I answered.

"Rather amusing just now to recall that 'Truth' a short while ago was saying there were too many horses in the Field Artillery, isn't it?" went on Dumble. "They said one team a battery to pull the guns into position from off the road would be enough, and that motor-traction could do the rest. Never mind; the old horse has earned his keep these last few days, hasn't he?"

"Look here," he added, "come along with me and I'll show you a find. You're thirsty, aren't you?"

"I shall say a grand Amen if you offer me a drink," said I, taking a deep breath.

"Well, come along—there's a cellar full of cider in this house here. I've left a man in charge to see there's no hanky-panky. I'm giving my men some, but under surveillance. No one allowed more than a pint."

It was the coolest, best-tasting cider I have ever drunk, not too sweet, not too tart. A gunner tipped up the barrel and poured it into a dilapidated-looking enamelled mug. But how good it was! I quaffed half a pint at a gulp, and said "Rather!" when asked if I would have more.

"Glad you liked it," said Dumble. "I must confess that that was my third."

The General, suave, keen-eyed, and pleasant-spoken, came up with the Colonel and the Brigade-Major as we got back to the battery. The General spoke encouragingly to most of us, and told the subalterns that gunnery rules were as important in this sort of warfare as on the drill-ground. "But don't forget that a cool head and common-sense are as good assets as any," he added.

We were looking now from the O—— ridge towards the P—— ridge, which we had occupied in the forenoon,—another fine landscape with a vast plain to the right which was being keenly watched for enemy movement. My signalling-sergeant had run out a telephone line about 600 yards in front of the composite battery, and the General, the Colonel, and the Brigade-Major went along to the O.P. to see Major Bullivant register his guns on certain points where the General thought it likely the enemy would collect.

The report that our Brigade was to be relieved and our guns taken over by our companion brigade, who had lost practically all their guns on the 21st, became more than a report when Colonel —— and his battery commanders assembled to meet the General. One of the battery commanders, a new-comer to the Brigade, was a well-known golfer whom I had last seen fighting a most exciting match in the

1914 amateur championship at Sandwich. He laughed when he recognised me. "A bit of leave and a bit of golf would be a nice change now, eh? I'm afraid we shan't know what leave is for a long time, though. But do you know what I did the last time I was on leave and had a few rounds over my home course——?"

But the return of the General prevented my knowing the golf exploit he was going to tell me. The Colonel called me for further instructions.

"The —rd Brigade are taking over our guns to-morrow morning at 6.30," he said. "I shall stay here until then with General —— (the Infantry Brigadier). I'll keep young Bushman with me, and my groom with our horses. You had better remain at the waggon line and keep in touch with the battery waggon lines. Will you send up my British warm when you get back, some sandwiches for Bushman and myself, and my Thermos flask?"

The almost paralysing block of traffic between P—— and O—— had thinned out now. It was easy enough also to move along the road from O—— to N——, whither three hours ago I had despatched H.Q. waggons to get them out of the way. For two hours, also, there had been a marked cessation of hostile fire. And as I rode towards N—— I thought of those reports of big British successes at Ypres and at Cambrai. They seemed feasible enough. What if they were true, and what if the offensive on this front had been checked because of the happening north? It was a pleasant thought, and I rather hugged it.

Later there was grim proof that the lull merely meant that the Hun was bringing up his guns and putting in fresh divisions to buffet and press our tired worn men.

5 P.M.: When I reached N—— and sat down in a hayfield while my servant brought me a cup of tea and some bread and cheese, I gave my mind to a five minutes' reconstruction of the incidents and aspects of the last four days. It had all been so hurried, and each particular emergency had demanded such complete concentration, that it was more than difficult to realise that so short a time had elapsed since the German hordes began their rush. I longed to see a newspaper, to read a lucid and measured account of the mighty conflict in which our Brigade, the centre of my present work-a-day world, could only have played such a tiny part. I longed for a chance to let my friends in England know that all was well with me. However——

The Regimental Sergeant-Major had established the H.Q. horse lines in a roadside field just outside the village. I wouldn't let him unload the waggons, but the brigade-clerk, devout adherent of orderliness and routine, had already opened the brigade office in the first cottage on the right of the village street, while the cook was in possession next door. It was the first village we had

come to during the retreat, whence all the civilian inhabitants had not fled, and the cook talked of fresh eggs for breakfast. I shaved and had a scrub down, put on a clean collar, and gained a healthier outlook on life generally. I sent out the four cycle orderlies to scout around and find the battery waggon lines, which I knew were coming to this vicinity, and the A.S.C. Supply Officer rode up and discussed the best place for unloading the morrow's food and forage for the Brigade. This settled, I wrote out the formal information for the batteries, and then decided to stroll round the village before dinner. "I've got a rabbit for your dinner to-night, sir," called the cook from his kitchen door, "a fresh rabbit." So I promised to be back by 8 o'clock.

When I came back there was an awkward surprise. All our waggons had been shifted and a French heavy battery were hauling their howitzers up the incline that led from the road to the field. The senior French officer was polite but firm. He was sorry to disturb us, but this was the most suitable spot for his howitzers to fire from.

The sergeant-major asked me whether I would like to shift the horses to such-and-such a spot in the field, but I said "No" to that. "These guns will be firing all night, and the horses will be only thirty yards away from them. They'll have no rest whatever, and they want every minute they can get. No, the Brigade are coming out of action to-morrow morning. We'll shift our waggon line right away to the other side of the village. Saddle-up at once, and get away before it is dark. Move well away from the village while you are about it, and camp by the roadside."

The cook looked glum and said my rabbit was cooked to a turn. "Keep it for me until we get settled down again," I said. I posted a cycle orderly to wait at the spot we were leaving, so as to re-direct messengers arriving from Division or from the Colonel; the brigade-clerk asked to be allowed to stay behind until the three other orderlies returned from the batteries—he wouldn't feel justified in leaving before then, he assured me. It was 8.15 P.M. when our little procession headed by the sergeant-major passed through the village.

I had sent my horses on, and it was on the point of darkness when I strode through the village, some way behind the column. A few officers of a Pioneer battalion that was moving out any moment stood at open doorways, and a group of drivers waited near the bridge ready to harness up their mules. Three aged women dressed in faded black, one of them carrying a bird-cage, had come out of a cottage and walked with feeble ungainly step towards the bridge. A couple of ancient men, pushing wheel-barrows piled high with household goods, followed.

Out of the distance came the brooding whine of an approaching howitzer shell. A mighty

rush of air, a blinding flash, and an appalling crash. An 8-inch had fallen in the middle of the street.

A running to and fro; a heartrending, whimpering cry from one of the women; and groans and curses farther up the street. None of the poor terror-stricken old people were hurt, thank God! but three of the drivers had been hit and two mules killed outright. The men were quickly lifted into the shelter of the nearest house, and the civilian refugees took cover in a doorway just before the second shell tore a great rent in the village green on the other side of the bridge. Five shells fell in all, and an officer afterwards tried to persuade the old women to take a lift in a G.S. waggon that was about to start. But they refused to leave their men, who would not abandon the wheelbarrows. When I walked away the five were again beginning their slow hazardous pilgrimage to the next village.

11 P.M.: That night I lay rolled up in a blanket at the foot of a tree. The H.Q. waggon line was duly settled for the night when I arrived—horses "hayed-up" and most of the men asleep on the ground. The cook insisted on producing the boiled rabbit, and I ate it, sitting on the shaft of the mess cart. I arranged with the N.C.O. of the piquet to change the orderly posted at the spot we had left so hurriedly every two hours—it was only ten minutes' ride on a cycle—and kept another sentry on the watch for messengers who might come searching for us. It was again a beautiful clear night, with a resplendent moon; a few long-range shells whizzed over, but none near enough to worry us; a pioneer party worked right through the night, putting up a stout line of barbed wire that went within thirty yards of where I lay; retreating baggage-waggons, French and British, passed along the road; restless flashes along the eastern skyline showed our guns in active defence.

I cannot say that I slept. The ground was hard, and it got very cold about 2 A.M. I could hear the sergeant-major snoring comfortably on the straw palliasse he had managed to "commandeer" for himself. At about 3 A.M. my ear caught the "chug-chug" of a motor-cycle. It came nearer and then stopped, and I heard the rider and our sentry talking. I got up and found it was the Divisional Artillery signalling-officer.

"Rather important," he said, without preamble. "The General says it is essential to get all transport vehicles over the canal to-night. There's bound to be a hell of a crush in the morning. Headquarters R.A. will be at L—— by to-morrow morning, so I should move as far that way as you can. I've just come over the canal, and there are two ways of crossing from here. I think you'll find the K—— route the least crowded. The great thing is to hurry. I'm going to look for the Colonel now. I'll tell him you are moving."

We bade each other "Good night." While the horses were being hooked in, I scribbled an order explaining the situation, and instructing all battery waggon lines to move towards L—— at once. I knew that in view of the 6.30 A.M. relief by the —rd Brigade, horses would be sent up for the officers and men at the guns, and it was possible that the guns would now be brought back from the O—— ridge before that time. The Boche was clearly coming on once more.

Cycle-orderlies sped away with the notes, and I was sending a signaller on a cycle to tell the sentry posted at N—— to rejoin us, when I discovered that the brigade-clerk had not yet turned up. I told the signaller to send him along as well.

Two of the orderlies returned and reported that A and C Batteries had received my instructions and had started. With the return of the next orderly I explained where we were to go to the sergeant-major, and told him to move off. I would come along behind with the others.

To my astonishment the signaller and the sentry came back without the brigade-clerk. "Can't find him anywhere, sir," said the signaller. "Didn't you see him while you were there?" I asked the orderly who had been doing sentry. "No, sir. I saw no lights in that house where the office was, and there's no one there now."

This was something unexpected, not to say perturbing. I turned to one of the cycle-orderlies who stood by. "Go back and make a thorough search for Briercliffe. Don't come back until you are satisfied he's not in the village. I'll wait here. You others, except one cyclist, go on and catch up the column."

A quarter of an hour, twenty minutes, half an hour! The orderly returned alone. "I can't find Briercliffe, sir. I've been into every house in N——. He's not there."

I couldn't understand it. The amazingly conscientious, thoroughly correct, highly efficient Briercliffe to be missing. "I can't wait any longer," I said, mounting my horse. "He's quite wide awake and should be all right. We'll get on."

X.

4 A.M.: For the best part of a mile my groom and I had the moonlit road to ourselves. We passed at the walk through the stone-flagged streets of M——, our horses' hoofs making clattering echoes in what might have been a dead city. Along the whole length of the tortuous main street were only two indications that there was life behind the closed doors and fastened shutters. Two French soldiers, leaning against a wall and talking, moved away as we rode up; then a door

banged, and all was quiet. Once, too, a cat ran stealthily across and startled my horse: I remember that distinctly, because it was the first cat I had seen since coming back to the fighting area.

At the junction, where the way from M—— joined the main road that ran parallel with the canal, stood a single British lorry. A grey-headed lieutenant, who was lighting a cigarette, came up when I hailed him, and told me our waggons had passed. He had pointed out the way, and they had gone to the left. "The first turning on the right after that will bring you to the bridge," he ended.

Our column was now moving along one of France's wonderful main roads — perfectly straight, tree-bordered, half its width laid with pavé. On either side good-sized villas, well-kept front gardens, "highly desirable residences" —comfortable happy homes a week before, now shattered, silent, deserted. The road as we followed it led direct to the battle-front.

We had gone a mile past the railway station, and were in open country, and had still to reach the first turning to the right. I asked the sergeant-major to trot ahead and let me know how much farther we had to go. "Over a mile yet, sir," was his report.

At last, however, a sign-post loomed up, and we struck right along a track that led over dreary waste lands. Before long we were forging through a damp clinging mist, that obviously came from the canal. Somewhere near the point towards which we were making, shells from a Boche big gun were exploding with dull heavy boomings. I sent the sergeant-major forward again, and he came back with the bewildering report, "We're on the wrong road, sir!"

"Wrong road!" I repeated. "What do you mean?"

"There are some French lorries in front, sir, and the sentry won't open the bridge gates to let them cross."

I felt puzzled and angered, and rode forward to question the French sentry. Half a dozen protesting lorry-drivers stood round him.

The bridge did lead to L——, he admitted, but it was only a light bridge, and he had orders to allow no military traffic over it. I became almost eloquent in describing the extreme lightness of my vehicles; but a *sous-officier* stepped out of a little hut and said he was sorry, but the orders were very strict, and he could not open the gates. The bridge we wanted was approached by the next turning to the right, off the main road. He assured me that it was a much better way, and, in any case, he couldn't open the gates.

There was nothing else for it: we made the long tedious journey back, out of the fog and into it again, and so got on the right track.

Weariness through lack of sleep and the dampness of the air made one feel chilly, and I got off my horse and walked. The horses stepped out mechanically; the men had lost

their chirpiness. There was a half-hour or so when I felt melancholy and depressed: the feeling of helplessness against the triumphant efficiency of the Boche got on one's nerves. Wasn't this talk of luring him on a myth? Why was he allowed to sweep forward at this overpowering pace, day after day, when each of our big advances had been limited to one hard, costly attack—and then stop? I quickened my step, and walked forward to where B Battery moved along the same road.

"Hullo, Dumble," I said. "You and D are running as separate batteries again, aren't you? How did you leave the cider-cellar?"

"We came back from there at about 5 P.M. There was a big discussion as to whether we should come farther back. The Colonel wanted to stay, and A Battery were in action there until four this morning. It was a Divisional decision that there should be a retirement to the next ridge. The poor old infantry were fed to the teeth. They'd sweated blood digging trenches all day on the O—— ridge, and then in the evening had to fall back and start digging again."

"Have you seen the Colonel?" I asked.

"He was still there with General —— when we came away. The —rd relieved us at 11 P.M., instead of first thing this morning; and we got down to N——, and had three hours' sleep, before your note arrived."

"Battery's pretty done, I suppose?"

"Well, it was just about time we came out of action. Men and horses would have been all-in in another day."

We crossed the fine broad canal, watched by the French soldiers guarding the bridge. Dumble was silent for some seconds, and then muttered, "You know, I hate to be coming back like this with the French looking on."

"Yes, I know," I replied,—"but they are good soldiers, and they understand."

"Yes—when I think of poor old Harville, and the fight he put up——" he broke off; and we trudged along.

"Do you know Harville always kept that speech of Beatty's in his pocket-book, that speech where he said England would have to be chastened and turn to a new way of life before we finished the war?" said Dumble later.

"Yes, he was like that—old Harville," I said quietly.

Over another bridge; and I still walked with Dumble at the head of his battery. There was a long wait while a line of French waggons moved out of our way. Some of the men were yawning with the sleepiness that comes from being cold as well as tired. We were now on the outskirts of a village that lay four miles from L——.

"What do you say if we stop at this place and go on after a rest?" said Dumble. I agreed.

I put Headquarter waggons and horses into an orchard, and found a straw loft where the men could lie down.

It was six in the morning, and I told the sergeant-major to have breakfast up at 7.30. There was a cottage opposite the orchard; some French soldiers were inside breakfasting. As I looked through the window I felt I would give anything for a sleep. The old housewife, a woman with a rosy Punch-like face, waited on the men. I asked her if she would let me have a room. She demurred a while, said everything was dirty and in disorder: the French *sous-officier* was not gone yet. Then I think she noticed how fagged I was. In two minutes my servant had brought my valise in. "I'm going to take my clothes off," I said, "but don't let me sleep after 7.30."

7.30 A.M.: I woke to find the sun streaming through the window. The booming of guns sounded nearer than before. I got off the bed and looked out. The fifty Headquarter men were breakfasting or smoking. Something prompted me: I had the feeling that we ought to leave the village at once. I shouted through the window for the sergeant-major. The column could be ready to move in a quarter of an hour, he answered. My servant brought me a change of boots and leggings, and I shaved. "Won't you wait and have breakfast, sir?" asked the sergeant-major. "No. Pack up everything; we'll get to L—— as soon as you are ready."

I went round to see Dumble before we started, but he said he wasn't going to hurry. "I'll let the men have a proper clean-up and leave about eleven," he decided.

The Headquarter column wound away from the village, and set out on a long smooth road that ran through a wood and edged away from the canal. Two miles from L—— we met the Brigade-Major. His tired eyes lighted up when he saw me. "What batteries have actually got over the canal?" he questioned. I told him that B were in the village I had just left. "D and A are coming round by the K—— bridge," he informed me. "I expect we shall send Headquarters and B on to F—— to get you out of the way—and give you some rest." And he nodded and rode on.

It looked as if the German rush was not expected to go much farther, for L—— was the first little town fully occupied by civilians that we had come to. Most of them were preparing to leave, and roomy French farm carts, piled high with curious medleys of mattresses, chairs and tables, clothing, carpets, kitchen utensils, clocks and pictures, kept moving off. But children played about the streets; girls stood and talked to French and British soldiers; and M. le Maire continued to function.

The Colonel, neat and unruffled, but pale with fatigue, stood waiting in the main thoroughfare as we came in. I informed him at once where I had left B Battery and what the Brigade-Major had mentioned. He told me he had remained with the Infantry

Brigadier until 6.30 A.M., the hour at which Colonel —— of the —rd had formally to relieve him; and he had only just crossed the canal. The infantry were still falling back. "I've lost Laneridge and my two horses," he added, shaking his head. "Laneridge missed me in the fog when I sent for him, and I'm half afraid he went towards the Hun lines. It was very puzzling to get your bearings up there this morning. I walked part of the way here and got a lift in a lorry."

9.30 A.M.: The Colonel had seen the C.R.A. and received instructions about continuing the march. We were going on another ten miles to the place which a week ago was to have become the rest area for Divisional Headquarters. I had come across a section of the D.A.C. who had arrived the night before and secured a billet, and they gave the Colonel and myself breakfast. I had discovered A Battery's mess in another cottage, every officer deep in a regular Rip Van Winkle slumber that told of long arrears of sleep. And I had been greatly cheered by the sudden appearance, mounted on a horse, of Briercliffe, the missing brigade-clerk. He explained his absence. When one of the orderlies returned to N——, saying he couldn't find A Battery's waggon lines, the admirable Briercliffe had retorted that they must be found, and he went in quest of them himself. Then when he heard the sudden order to cross the canal he had the common-sense to come along with A Battery.

Neither D Battery nor B Battery had yet arrived. The Colonel, having shaved, felt ready for the fray again, dictated the route-march orders, and told me to fix 11.30 A.M. as the time of starting. Fortunately, too, his horses and his groom had turned up. The traffic down the main street, with its old-fashioned plaster houses, its squat green doors, and the Mairie with its railed double-stone steps, was getting more congested. Infantry transport and French heavy guns were quickening their pace as they came through. The inhabitants were moving out in earnest now, not hurriedly, but losing no time. A group of hatless women stood haranguing on the Mairie steps; a good-looking girl, wearing high heels and bangles, unloaded a barrow-load of household goods into a van the Maire had provided, and hastened home with the barrow to fill it again; a sweet-faced old dame, sightless, bent with rheumatism, pathetic in her helpless resignation, sat on a wicker-chair outside her doorway, waiting for a farm cart to take her away: by her side, a wide-eyed solemn-faced little girl, dressed in her Sunday best, and trying bravely not to cry.

10.15 A.M.: The Colonel met me in the street; he had just come from seeing the C.R.A. again. "Better tell A and C Batteries to move off at once, A leading. Headquarters can

start as well. It will be best to get out of this place as quickly as possible. The enemy is coming on fast, and there will be an awkward crush shortly."

11 A.M.: The Boche machine-guns could be heard now as plainly as if they were fighting along the canal banks. A battery had marched out with their waggons, Headquarters behind them. I stood with the Colonel in the square to watch the whole brigade go through. Young Bushman had ridden off towards the canal to search for news of D Battery.

And now the first enemy shell: a swishing rush of air and a vicious crack—a 4·2 H.V. It fell two streets from us. Another and another followed. Shouts from behind! The drivers spurred their horses to a trot. Clouds of dust rose. Odd civilians alternately cowered against the wall, and ran panting for the open country, making frightened cries as each shell came over. A butcher's cart and a loaded market-cart got swept into the hurrying military traffic.

"I don't like this," muttered the Colonel, frowning. "It would be stupid to have a panic."

On the Mairie steps I could see M. le Maire ringing a hand-bell and shouting some sort of proclamation. With a certain dignity, and certainly with little apparent recognition that shells were falling close, he descended the steps and strode along the street and through the square, all the time determinedly shaking his bell. As he passed, I asked him gravely why he rang the bell. He stared over his glasses with astonishment, responded simply "Pour partir, m'sieur," and walked on, still ringing. A bizarre incident, but an instance of duty, highly conceived and carried out to the end.

A colonel of one of our Pioneer battalions rode by and hailed the Colonel. "We seem to be driving it pretty close," he said. "There's a lot more artillery to cross yet, and they are shelling the bridge hard. Which way do you go from here?"

"I've got two batteries to come, and I'm afraid one of 'em's still over the bridge," responded the Colonel. "We go to F—— from here."

11.30 A.M.: C Battery was passing now, with B not far behind. The stream of traffic making for beyond the town was continuous as ever, but the shelling had quietened, and the horses were kept at the walk. The Colonel stood and accepted the salutes of his batteries, and criticised points of turn-out and horse-mastership as though he were making an ordinary route-march inspection. And this, compelling them to think of something other than the physical dangers around and behind them, had its moral effect upon the men. They held themselves more erect, showed something of pride of regiment and race, and looked men fit and worthy to fight again.

Civilians were still hurrying

out of the town. A family passed us, the husband in his best suit of dull black, top-hat, and white tie and all, pushing a perambulator loaded with clothes, household ornaments, and cooking requisites, his three children dragging at their mother's skirts and weeping piteously. A fine-looking *vieillard*, with clean-cut waxen features and white-looking moustaches, who wore his brown velvet jacket and sombrero with an air, walked by erect and slow, taking what he could of his belongings on a wheel-barrow. Even the conjunction of the wheel-barrow could not prevent him looking dignified and resolute.

And a terrier and a young retriever, oblivious of the tragedy around them, gambolled up and down the Mairie steps and chased each other across the street.

12 noon: Bigger shells had begun to fall, and still D Battery had not come. The Colonel glanced at his watch. One shell came near enough to send a chimney-pot and some slates clattering to the ground, making a pair of water-cart horses plunge wildly; a French soldier was killed farther down the street. An officer cantered by and directed a Horse Artillery battery that had passed a few minutes before, and had a clear half-mile of road in front of it, to break into a trot. Voices in rear could be heard shouting to those in front to go faster. Two riderless, runaway wheelers, dragging a smashed limber-pole, raced after the Horse Artillery Battery. "I'm afraid we shall have to say Good-bye to D Battery," said the Colonel seriously.

I walked to the end of the square and looked down the road towards the canal. Dust rose in clouds, and straining horses still came on. Out of the welter I saw young Bushman's horse on the pathway coming towards me. "D Battery's all right," he shouted to me, and a minute later I heard him explaining to the Colonel.

"D Battery's over now, sir. It has been touch-and-go. Some Horse Artillery in front had a waggon hit, and that caused a stoppage; and there were a lot of other waggons in front as well. They are putting shells all round the bridge now, sir. D Battery have had two gunners wounded, but they are over now, sir."

D Battery came through at a trot, but the Colonel regarded their general appearance as soldierly. We remained in the square and saw the tail-end of their mess cart.

"And now," observed the Colonel, lighting a cigarette and noting the time, "we may as well gather our horses and get along ourselves."

"I feel very relieved about D Battery," he said five minutes later as we rode along; and he smiled for the first time for quite three hours.

XI.

1 P.M.: For some miles after leaving L—— it was retreat —rapid, undisguised, and yet with a plan. Thousands of men, scores of guns and transport vehicles, hundreds of civilians caught in the last rush, all struggling to evade the mighty pincer's clutch of the German masses who, day after day, were crushing our attempts to rally against their weight and fury. Unless collectedly, in order, and with intercommunications unbroken, we could pass behind the strong divisions hurrying to preserve the precious contact between French and British, we should be tripped. And when I say we, I mean the very large force of which our brigade formed one tiny part. Not even the Colonel knew much at this moment of the wider strategy that was being worked out. The plain and immediate task was to free the brigade, with its seven hundred odd men and its horses and waggons, from the welter of general traffic pouring on to the main roads, and bring it intact to the village that Division had fixed as our destination. And as we had now become a non-fighting body, a brigade of Field Artillery without guns, it was more than ever our business to get out of the way.

Our men found room for some of the aged civilians in motor-lorries and G.S. waggons; but I shall always remember one silver-haired dame who refused to be separated from the wheelbarrow, heaped up with her belongings, which she was pushing to K——, seven miles away. For some reason she would not allow a gunner to wheel the barrow for her. Poor obstinate old soul! I hope she got away; if she didn't, I trust the Boche was merciful.

The Colonel and I rode through a forest in order to catch up the batteries. As we emerged from the wood we came upon five brigades of cavalry—three French and two British—fresh as paint, magnificently mounted, ready and waiting. "The most cheering sight we've seen this morning," remarked the Colonel.

We came up with D Battery, and rode at their head. Despite the spurt to cross the canal, their turn-out was smart and soldierly, and there was satisfaction in the Colonel's quick, comprehensive glance. Through J——, another village from which the inhabitants had fled the day before, and past the outskirts of H——, with its grey cathedral and quaint tower. The evacuation here had been frantic, and we heard stories of pillage and looting and of hordes of drunken men—not, one is glad to say it, British soldiers. In all that galling, muddling week I did not see a single drunken soldier. As

we were near a considerable town I gave my groom twenty francs, and told him to buy what food he could: we might be very short by nightfall. He returned with some sardines, some tinned tunny fish, and a few biscuits, the sardines costing five francs a small tin. At one cross-road a dozen American Red Cross cars were drawn up, and I recall the alacrity of a middle-aged American doctor, wearing gold pince-nez, in hopping off his ambulance and snapshotting the Colonel at the head of the battery. I wondered bitterly whether that photograph would subsequently be published under the heading, "British Artillery in Retreat."

2.30 P.M.: The four batteries were now ranged alongside a railway siding at a point where the road by which we had journeyed joined one of the most important main roads in France. For several hours this great traffic artery had been packed with troops and transport moving to and from the battle-front. It was hot and dusty, and our men and horses were glad of the half-hour's halt, although the respite had only lasted so long because the traffic on the main route had been too continuous for us to turn on to it and reach the road fifty yards farther down along which we had to continue. Remembering a lesson of the Mons retreat emphasised by a Horse Artillery major lecturing at Larkhill—that his horses kept their condition because every time there was a forced halt near a village he despatched his gunners with the water-buckets—I had told my groom to search around until he found water for my two horses. Then I stood under the trees lining the main road and watched three battalions of French infantry march past, moving north of the part of the front our brigade had just left. They were older, smaller, more town-bred French soldiers than those we had seen during the two previous days, more spectacles among them, and a more abstracted expression. The thought came to me that here must be last-line reserves. Up on the steep hills that overlooked the railway siding bearded French troops were deepening trenches and strengthening barbed wire.

3 P.M.: We were anxious to get on now, and longed for a couple of City of London traffic policemen to stand in majestic and impartial control of these road junctions. The Colonel and Major Bullivant, after expostulating five minutes with a French major, had got our leading battery across. Then the long line of traffic on the main route resumed its apparently endless flow. An R.A.M.C. captain came out and stood by as I stationed myself opposite the road we wanted our three remaining batteries to turn down, watching to take quick advantage of the G in the first possible G A P. "Pretty lively here last night," volunteered the R.A.M.C. captain. "General scramble to get out, and some unusual sights.

There was a big ordnance store, and they hadn't enough lorries to get the stuff away, so they handed out all manner of goods to prevent them being wasted. The men got pretty well *carte blanche* in blankets, boots, and puttees, and you should have seen them carting off officers' shirts and underclothing. There was a lot of champagne going begging too, and hundreds of bottles were smashed to make sure the men had no chance of getting blind. And there was an old sapper colonel who made it his business to get hold of the stragglers. He kept at it about six hours, and bunged scores of wanderers into a prisoners-of-war cage; then he had 'em marched off to a collecting station. He was hot stuff, I can tell you."

A gap came at last on the main route, but something also that would dam the opening we had awaited for over an hour.

A tremendous line of French lorries was moving towards me on the road opposite. The French officer in charge had come forward to reconnoitre the crossing. Three British lorries, loading up, also stood on the road along which we wanted to go. If the French lorries reached that spot first, our batteries might be held up another hour. It was a moment for unscrupulous action. I told my groom to dash off and tell Major Bartlett to come along at the trot; then I slipped across and engaged the French captain in conversation. If I could prevent him signalling back for his lorries to quicken speed, all would be well. If Major Bartlett failed, there would be a most unholy mix up near the three stationary lorries. Major Bartlett responded nobly. His leading team reached the three lorries while the first French motor-waggon was still thirty yards away. The gap between the stationary lorry and the moving one narrowed to eight yards; but the waggon and six horses were through, and the battery now commanded the position with a line of horsed waggons and baggage-carts stretching back along the fifty yards of the main road, with A and D Batteries following in column of route past the railway siding. The line of French lorries extended back far as eye could see. The French officer turned sharply, cursed impatiently, and asserted volubly that his lorries must come through. I explained soothingly what a long time we had waited, and asked his forbearance. Meanwhile C Battery continued to trot through the gap, and I called Heaven to witness that the whole of our brigade would be through and away before ten minutes passed. I ran back to urge A and D Batteries to keep up the pace. When our very last water-cart, mess-cart, and G.S. waggon had passed, I thanked the French officer with great sincerity, and felt I had done a proper job of work.

4.30 P.M.: We sat by the

roadside eating bread-and-cheese — the Colonel, young Bushman, and I. The batteries were well on the way to their destination; and we three, jogging along in rear, had encountered Bombardier M'Donald, triumphant at having filled his forage and rations waggon for yet another day. So we and our grooms helped ourselves to bread-and-cheese and satisfied hefty appetites, and drank the cider with which Bushman had filled his flask at O—— the day before.

Another of the mournful side-spectacles of the retreat was being enacted under our eyes. Opposite a small cottage a cart packed to a great height, but marvellously balanced on its two huge wheels, stood ready to move off. A wrinkled sad-eyed woman, perched on top, held beside her her grandchild — a silent, wondering little girl. A darkly handsome, strongly-built daughter had tied a cow to the back of the cart. A bent old man began to lead the wide-backed Percheron mare that was yoked to the shafts with the mixture of straps and bits of rope that French farm folk find does well enough for harness. But the cow, bellowing in an abandonment of grief, tugged backwards, and the cart did not move. The daughter, proud-eyed, self-reliant, explained that the cow was calling for her calf. The calf would never be able to make the journey, and they had been compelled to sell it, and it would be killed for food. It was hard, but it was war.

They tried again; but the cow refused to be comforted, and tugged until the rope threatened to strangle her. They brought the calf out again and tied him alongside his now pacified mother; but this time, when the cart moved forward, he protested in fear and bewilderment, and tried to drag himself free. The cart was still there when we rode off.

Our way ran through a noble stretch of hilly country, well wooded, with sparkling streams plashing down the hillsides — a landscape of uninhabited quiet. Two aeroplanes droned overhead — the first Allied planes we had seen since the retreat began. "The old French line," observed the Colonel later, pointing out a wide system of well-planned trenches, deep dug-outs, and broad belts of rusted barbed wire. "The Boche ought not to get through here."

Up and over a hill, and down into a tiny hamlet which more stricken civilians were preparing to leave. As our little cavalcade drew near, a shrinking old woman, standing in a doorway, drew a frightened little girl towards her, and held a hand over the child's eyes. "I believe they took us to be Germans at first," said the Colonel when we had passed.

In another village a woman was trying to make a cow pull a heavily-laden waggon up the

hill. With streaming eyes and piteous gestures she besought us to assist with our horses. She would pay us money. Twice before she had lost everything through the Boche, she pleaded. The Colonel looked grieved, but shook his head. "We'll send back a pair of draught horses if we can," was all he said to me. And we did.

6 P.M.: We had reached F——, a hillside village that had thought never to be threatened by the Germans again. Dwellings damaged during their last visit which had been repaired. New houses made of fine white stone, quarried in the district, had been built, and were building. The bitterness of it if the foul devastating Boche were to come again! There were many evidences of the hurried flight of the last two days,—torn letters and papers, unswept fire-grates, unconsumed food and drinks, beds with sheets in them, drawers hurriedly searched for articles that could be taken away, disconsolate wandering dogs. A few days before it had been arranged that the Major-General, his Divisional Staff, Ordnance, the Divisional brass band, and all the usual appurtenances of a Divisional Headquarters, should come and make this village a Divisional rest area. Few even of the first preparations for visitation were left now. D.A.D.O.S., blue-tabbed and business-like, was in the main street, bewailing the scarcity of lorries for removing his wares to an area still farther back. He had several rifles he would be pleased to hand out to our batteries. There was a large quantity of clothing which would have to be left in the store he had established. Any we didn't want would we burn, or drop in the stream before we left? No lorry to remove the Divisional canteen. Would we distribute the supplies free to our men? Biscuits, chocolate, potted meats, toothpaste, and cigarettes went like wild-fire.

Brigade H.Q. mess was installed in a new house that had chalked messages scrawled on doors, walls, and mirrors, telling searching relations and friends the address in a distant town to which the occupants of the house had fled. In another dwelling that Boche aeroplanes had already bombed, we discovered sleeping quarters. At 7 P.M. a lieutenant on a motor-cycle arrived with Corps orders for the morrow. We were to leave for D—— immediately the tactical situation demanded it.

We dined early, and sought our beds early too. I had been asleep two minutes, as I thought—really about an hour and a half—when Dumble woke me up. "Cavalry are coming through," he said, shining his electric torch right in my eyes, "and they say the enemy is at E——. Hadn't you better let the Colonel know?"

"No," I retorted with some asperity.

"But listen; can you hear all that traffic? It's our infantry coming back."

"Can you hear machine-gun fire?" I asked resentfully.

"No."

"Well, I'm damned if I disturb the Colonel until you can tell me that, at least," I said finally, turning on my right side.

XII.

The usual monotonous spectacle when we woke next morning: the narrow streets of what a few days before had been a tranquil, out-of-the-war village choked with worn-out troops marching to go into rest. Now that we had become a brigade of artillery without guns, a British non-fighting unit struggling to get out of the way of a manœuvring French army, our one great hope was that Corps would send us right back to a depot where we could refit ourselves with fresh guns and reinforcements, and to some spot where we need not be wondering every five minutes whether the enemy was at our heels. Men who have fought four days and nights on end feel like that when the strain of actual battle ceases.

The Boche guns sounded nearer, and the Colonel had ordered a mounted officer to go back and seek definite information upon the situation. By 10 A.M. a retiring French battalion marched through, and reported that the line was again being withdrawn. By 11 A.M. two batteries of "75's" came back. That decided the Colonel that the tactical situation demanded our departure, and the brigade began the march to E——. On past more evacuated villages. Abandoned farm carts—some of which our batteries eagerly adopted for transporting stores and kit—and the carcases of dogs, shot or poisoned, lying by the roadside, told their own story of the rush from the Hun. By 1 P.M. we reached E——, a medieval town whose gable-ends and belfry towers, and straight rows of hoary lime-trees, breathed the grace and charm of the real France. I made immediately for the Mairie, bent upon securing billets for officers and men; but standing at the gateway was a corps despatch-rider who handed over instructions for the brigade to continue the march to D——, a town 20 kilometres distant.

5 P.M.: D——, to which I rode in advance with a billeting officer from each battery, proved to be a drab smoky town of mean-looking, jerry-built houses. One thought instinctively of the grimiest parts of Lancashire and the Five Towns. The wide and interminably long main street was filled with dust-laden big guns and heavy hows., four rows of them. Every retreating division in France seemed to be arriving and to be bringing more dust. Hundreds of refugees from villages now in Boche possession had come, too. What a place to be sent to! It was useless looking for billets, so I fixed upon a vast field on the outskirts of the

town where we could establish our horse lines and pitch tents and bivouacs. This was satisfactory enough, but the watering problem was bound to be difficult. Four small pumps in the main street and one tiny brackish pond totalled the facilities. It would take each battery an hour and a half to water its horses. "Corps moves in most mysterious ways," crooned Stone. "Why did they send us here?" We rode and walked until we were tired, but found nothing that would improve matters. Then Fentiman, Stone, and I found the Café de la Place, and entered the "Officers only" room, where we sat down to a bottle of wine and devoured the Continental 'Daily Mail' of March 23, the first paper we had seen since starting the retreat. Madame informed us that some officers of Divisional Headquarters had turned up the day before and were dining there. As we went out to go and meet the batteries and lead them to the waggon lines, there was a shout of recognition, and "Swiffy" and the little American doctor ran up, grinning and rather shamefaced. "We thought of posting you as deserters," I said with pretended seriousness, "not having seen you since the afternoon of the 23rd." It was now the 26th. They narrated a long and somewhat sheepish story that, boiled down, told of a barn that promised a sound afternoon's nap, an awakening to find every one vanished; then a worried and wearied tramp in search of us, with nothing to eat except what they could beg or buy at ruinous prices; one perturbing two hours when they found themselves walking into the arms of the oncoming Hun; and finally, a confirmed resolve never to stray far from the Brigade mess cart again.

7 P.M.: When the batteries were settled in their waggon lines, I led the Colonel and "Swiffy" and the doctor through the crowded dusty streets into the Café de la Place. The restaurant was filled with French and British officers. "Swiffy" insisted on cracking a bottle of champagne to celebrate the return of the doctor and himself to the fold; then I spotted Ronny Hertford, the Divisional salvage officer, who was full of talk and good cheer, and said he had got his news from the new G.S.O.II., who had just come from England, travelling with a certain politician. "It's all right, old boy," bubbled Ronny. "The War Office is quite calm about it now; we've got 'em stone-cold. Foch is in supreme command, and there are any number of divisions in reserve which haven't been called on. We're only waiting to know if this is the real push, or only a feint, and then we strike. We've got 'em trapped, old top, no doubt about that."

"Right-o, strategist!" I retorted in the same vein.

"Do you want to buy a calf, old boy?" he switched off. "Look here; there's one under the table. About 110 lbs. of meat at 3 francs a pound. Dirt cheap these times. A Frenchman has left it with Madame

to sell. We'd buy it for our mess, but we've got a goose for dinner to-night. Stay and dine with us, old boy."

Through the glass door that showed into the café one saw a little group of civilians, dressed in their Sunday black, waiting for carts to take them from the town. A mother was suckling a wailing child. An old cripple nodded his head helplessly over hands propped up by his stick. A smart young French soldier came in at the door, and Madame's fair-haired daughter rushed to his arms and held him while she wept. They talked fast, and the civilians listened with strained faces. "Her fiancé," quietly explained an interpreter who came through the café to join us in the "Officers only" room. "He's just come from —— with a motor-transport. He says he was fired at by machine-guns, which shows that the Boche is still coming on."

The Camp Commandant of the Division, nervously business-like, the Baths' Officer, D.A.D.O.S., and a couple of padres came in. The Camp Commandant refused to hear of the Colonel sleeping in a tent. "We've got a big dormitory at the back here, sir—thirty wire-beds. We can put all your Brigade Headquarter officers up." The Colonel protested that we should be quite happy in bivouacs, but he was overruled.

We dined in a tent in the waggon lines. As I made my way there I noticed a blue-painted motor-van, a mobile French wireless station, some distance away in the fields. What really caught my eye when I drew near it was a couple of Camembert cheeses, unopened and unguarded, on the driver's seat. I bethought myself that the operator inside the van might be persuaded to sell one of the cheeses. He wasn't, but he was extremely agreeable, and showed me the evening *communiqué* that had just been "ticked" through. We became friends, which explains why for three days I was able to inform the Camp Commandant, Ronny Hertford, and all their party, of the latest happenings at the Front, hours before the French newspapers and the Continental 'Daily Mail' arrived.

And what do you think the men of two of our batteries were doing an hour after the camps were pitched and the horses watered?—playing a football match! Marvellous fellows!

We stayed at D—— until the evening of the 28th, days of gossip and of fairly confident expectations, for we knew now that the Boche's first offensive was held—but a time of waiting and of wondering where we were to be sent next. Division was nearly thirty miles away, incorporated with the French Army, and still fighting, while Corps seemed to have forgotten that we needed supplies. Still there was no need to worry about food and forage. E—— was an important rail-head, and the Supply Officer seemed anxious to get his stores distributed as soon as they came in: he was prepared to treat most comers as famine-stricken

stragglers. Besides, near the station stood an enormous granary, filled to the brim, simply waiting to be requisitioned.

About noon on the 28th we were very cast down by the news that, to meet the demand for reinforcements, the Brigade might be disbanded, and the gunners hurried off in driblets, to make up losses on various parts of our particular Army's front.

The Colonel had instructions to attend a Staff Conference in the afternoon, and each battery was ordered to prepare a list of its available gunners.

There were sore hearts that afternoon. Many of the men had been with the Brigade since it was formed, and to be scattered broadcast after doing well, and coming through a time of stress and danger together, would knock the spirit out of every one. The Colonel came back at tea-time, impassive, walking briskly. I knew before he opened his lips that the Brigade was saved. "We move to-night to C——. We are going on to B—— to refit," was all he said.

. . . . . .

Every one was anxious to be off, fearing that the Staff might change its mind. It rained in torrents that night, and owing to the Corps' failure to map out proper accommodation arrangements, we slept anyhow and anywhere, but no one minded much. The Brigade was still in being, and nothing else mattered. I could tell many stories of the next few days—marching and billeting and getting ready for action again; of the village that no English troops had visited before, and the inhabitants that feared us, and afterwards did not want us to leave; of the friendly bearded patron of an estaminet, who flourished an 'Echo de Paris,' and pointed to the words *ténacité anglaise* in an account of the fighting; of the return of the signalling officer, who, while attending a course at an Army School, had been roped in to lead one of Sandeman Carey's infantry platoons; of the magnificently equipped casualty clearing station that a week before the offensive had been twenty-five miles behind the lines, and only got its last patients away two hours before the Boches arrived!

. . . . . .

April 2nd: A few more new guns had come in from the Refitting Depot. We were almost complete to establishment. The horses were out grazing and getting fat again. Most of the men were hard at it, playing their eternal football. The Colonel came out of the château, which was Brigade Headquarters billet, and settled himself in a deck-chair. He looked sun-tanned and fit.

"If all Colonels were as competent and knowledgeable as our Colonel, we should have won the war by now," said Dumble as he and I walked away. "What a beautiful day."

"Yes. Oh to be in England, now that April's here," I chimed in.

"Oh, to be in England any bally old time of the year," Dumble corrected me.

A FORGOTTEN CAPITAL OF THE NEAR EAST.

BY LIEUT.-COMMANDER H. C. LUKACH, R.N.V.R.

BETWEEN the Kyrenia Mountains, which form, as it were, the northern sea-wall of Cyprus, and the mountainous mass in the south-west of the island culminating in Mount Troödos or Olympus, lies an unwooded but extremely fertile plain. This plain, on account of its geographical situation, bears the name of Mesaoria, "between the mountains," and stretches from Famagusta in the east to the bay of Morphou in the west. Apart from occasional plantations and from groves of olives beside some of the larger villages, the Mesaoria is entirely treeless; and in summer, after the crops have been harvested, it has a dreary and barren air when seen from mountains clad with fir. Yet in truth it is anything but barren. It is the granary of Cyprus, very fruitful in wheat and barley; and even in autumn, when the rivers are dry and the sun has scorched it to a dusty brown, the glorious skyline of the Kyrenia range, fantastically serrated, relieves it of the reproach of ugliness and desolation.

In the middle of this plain lies the capital of Cyprus, Nicosia, despite the fact that the capitals of islands do not generally lie inland. Nor has Nicosia always held that position. After Cyprus was united into a single state, both Paphos and Salamis preceded her in the distinction; and it was not until the advent of the Lusignans that she rose to pre-eminence over the other Cypriote towns. She then became, and for the ensuing three centuries remained, the capital of the most picturesque dynasty and most brilliant kingdom of the Latin East; and in this period, whence date her principal monuments, acquired the primacy which she has since retained. The Venetian senator Diedo describes her at the height of her prosperity as "a city famed as a fortress, glorying in her buildings, and widely known for her riches. Her happy position, her pleasant climate, the gifts showered on her by nature, the added charms of art, had given her a place among the fairest, strongest, and most renowned cities of Europe."[1]

The peculiar charm possessed by the remnants of the Latin East, that East which has witnessed the rule of Crusading knights and the splendour of Frankish merchant princes, is of a rare and subtle kind, the offspring of oriental nature and medieval western art. It lies —if the attempt to define so elusive a thing may be permitted—in Gothic architecture blending with Saracenic be-

[1] 'Storia della Repubblica di Venezia,' Venice, 1751.

neath a Mediterranean sky, in the courts of ruined castles overgrown with deep green cypresses, in date-palms rearing their stately crowns above some abbey's traceried cloisters, in emblazoned flamboyant mansions illumined, as they could never be in the West, by the golden haze of the Levant. The most compact relic of the Latin East is Rhodes—Rhodes whose fortifications, one of the mightiest monuments which medieval military art has produced, enclose what has been said to be the most perfect specimen extant of a fifteenth-century French town. And happily, though the Latin East is disappearing amid the upheavals of recent years, the glories of Rhodes are likely to be endowed with a new lease of life. Italy's national device, the letters F.E.R.T., mysterious emblem of the Annunziata, are generally held to represent the words *fortitudo ejus Rhodum tenuit;* and the Italians of to-day, mindful of the exploits of the Langue of Italy in Carian waters and Carian isles, are carefully preserving throughout the Dodecanese the traces of the great Order, to whose renown their forebears contributed their share. In Syria there survives nothing so well preserved as Rhodes; but the vestiges of the Crusading principalities have not yet vanished completely. There is the town of Tartus, growing out of the Crusading castle of Tortosa like Spalato out of Diocletian's palace. There are the Hospitallers' mighty fortresses of Safîta and Merqab and Krak des Chevaliers, the latter now the capital of a district under the name of Qal'at el-Hosn. There are the castles of Belvoir and Blanchegarde, Baniyas and Sahioun, Château Pélerin and La Pierre du Desert, testifying even in their decay to the skill and vigour of their builders.

Less military than the *châteaux-forts* of Syria, more domestic, too, than the knightly stronghold of Rhodes, Nicosia probably is still, despite the changes and accretions of recent years, the most typical example of a Latin Eastern town. If you approach it from the south by the Larnaca road, it is hidden from sight until you are within a mile or two of it by intervening ridges of hill. Then, when you have topped the rise, whence in 1570 the Turks launched their last successful assault, there is suddenly revealed to you, lying in a little hollow, what seems to be a city of dreams. Like Damascus as seen in springtime from the eastern slopes of Hermon, a white city girt in a belt of brilliant verdure, so is Nicosia engarlanded in green, in a cincture of pine, cypress, and eucalyptus, growing from the medieval fosse by which it is encompassed. No longer flooded with the waters of the Pedias, when, after the winter rains, that mountain torrent tumbles headlong from the hills above Machaera, the moat of Nicosia has become a flourishing plantation, a delightful bower for the walls and for the city within them. Above the trees, as you look from the ridge, appear

the Venetian ramparts, a perfect circle, with their eleven bastions set at regular intervals. Enclosed by this double ring of green trees and golden-brown masonry lies Nicosia, a medley of churches and mosques, of medieval palaces and Turkish qonaqs, of date-palms and orange groves, Gothic turrets and Saracenic minarets. Precisely in the middle of the town stands its noblest and most arresting monument, S. Sophia, once the cathedral of the Lusignan kings and now the principal mosque of Cyprus. Harmonious in its proportions and beautiful in its details, this glorious building dominates not only the town but the entire vicinity; while its twin minarets that rise, slender and graceful, from two unfinished Gothic towers, embody in this combination the very essence of the Latin East.

It happens only too often that towns, which at a distance wear the beauty of enchantment, surrender something, at any rate, of that beauty on closer acquaintance. The charm of the *ensemble* is dissolved by propinquity; sordid details, unobserved from afar, obtrude themselves on approach with vexing persistence. The latter, moreover, being of ruder stuff, produce the more enduring effect, shattering the delicate illusion of the distant view, all too fragile to be re-created. Happily Nicosia is one of those rare places where anticipations may be realised to the full. Cross the mile or so which still separates you from the walls, and you find yourself at the Caraffa bastion, beside which the Porta Giuliana,[1] or Famagusta Gate, a deep and vaulted gallery, yawns cavernous and black. Plunge by means of this tunnel — as romantic an entrance to a city as you could wish to see—through the thicknesses of the ramparts, and you emerge in the most picturesque of towns, filled with folk as picturesque as itself. Orthodox peasants from neighbouring villages, in top-boots and baggy breeches, are driving in their donkeys, laden with bales of fragrant *throumbi*[2] for sale in the bazaars. Long-haired cassocked priests are sitting under the trellis of a coffee-shop, pulling vigorously at their narghilés. Turkish ladies, heavily veiled, pick their way daintily across the muddy streets; others look down from projecting balconies of lattice, which the Turks call *shahnishin*, "the place for the king to sit." Elderly khojas, in fur-lined gowns and white turbans, pass solemnly by, fingering the *tessbih*, or conversation beads, which hang like rosaries from their wrists. Grave Turkish merchants squat cross-legged

[1] Named after Giulio Savorgnano, the celebrated Venetian, who designed the fortifications of Nicosia.

[2] The dried leaves of the wild thyme, much used in Cyprus for kindling fires.

in their booths, seemingly indifferent to the prospects of a deal. And so, through tortuous streets alive with motley crowds, you wander on, lighting, as you pass, on many a sculptured fragment on porch, cornice, and coat-of-arms, once parts of some Lusignan or Venetian mansion. Finally you reach the heart of the town and the constellation of medieval monuments which is grouped around S. Sophia.

For a detailed architectural description of S. Sophia, the reader is referred to Monsieur Camille Enlart's 'L'Art Gothique et la Renaissance en Chypre,'[1] a work indispensable to those interested in the medieval glories of the island. Nicosia's Lusignan cathedral is of much more than local eminence: as a product of the best French work of the thirteenth century, it claims the attention of every student of Gothic architecture. Begun, it is generally assumed, in 1209, probably on the site of an earlier building, much advanced through the munificence of S. Louis during his sojourn in Nicosia in 1248, consecrated in 1326, and never wholly completed, this cathedral, in the purest style of the Ile de France, remains, despite its chequered history, one of the noblest productions of the Latin East. The fact that it has been a mosque for three and a half centuries has done little, if anything, to detract from its beauties, while it has certainly averted the ruin which would otherwise have overtaken it, as it has overtaken countless Crusading churches not diverted to the use of the Moslem conquerors. It is true that the *mihrab*, which is built into the south transept to face Mecca, gives a slightly twisted appearance to the interior, but this does not destroy the impressive lines of the vaulting, or the building's striking proportions. The whitewash on the walls is far from unpleasing in these latitudes; the plain shields bearing the names of Allah, Mohammed, and the first four Khalifs are in harmony with the severity of the decoration. The very remarkable narthex, with its sculptured panels of Pentelic marble, remains as it was when built by Archbishop John de Polo in 1326. The Cypriote Turk is the most tolerant of men — he has retained the Christian appellation of his principal mosque, and he attends the Anglican Church on the King's birthday,— and at Bairam or the Night of Power, or other great festival, Christian visitors are invited to witness the ceremonies in S. Sophia from the women's gallery. Carpets and rugs, some of considerable beauty, are then laid out in line with the *mihrab*, the chandeliers are ablaze with a thousand lights, and the spectacle afforded by the rhythmic prostrations of the congregation in these surroundings is

[1] Paris, 1899.

probably not less dignified than was a function in the days of the Lusignans.

S. Sophia is a gem, and it rests in a worthy setting. Facing its north door are the remains of the Palace of the Latin Archbishops, now the charming residence of an English lady. To the east is the *buyük medresé*, or principal seminary of the Turks, whose library of Arabic, Persian, and Turkish manuscripts — admirable specimens of Oriental caligraphy — is a haunt of ancient peace. Off the south-east corner, where S. Sophia throws a flying buttress across the road, stands a well-preserved fourteenth-century house, perhaps the medieval Deanery. To the south, opposite the narthex, is the Church of S. Nicholas of the English — architecturally a pleasing mixture of early and late Gothic, with traces of Byzantine and Renaissance influences, and historically of especial interest to Englishmen. This church owes its name to the fact that it was the home in Cyprus of the English knightly Order of S. Thomas of Acre, founded during the Third Crusade in honour of Thomas à Becket. In 1570 it fell into the hands of the Turks, who call it the Bezestan (cotton market), and use it as a grain store; but it is kept in repair by the Department of Evqaf (Moslem Pious Foundations), and has lost few of its essential features. Its three beautiful northern doors make it a worthy pendant to S. Sophia, only divided from it by the width of the road.

From the roof of S. Sophia, a forest of delicate buttresses and tapering finials, you enjoy a wide view over the churches and palaces and mosques of Nicosia. The Archbishop's Palace, the Deanery, and S. Nicholas are at your feet. To the south rises the 'Omerieh Mosque, the Augustinian Church of Latin times, rich in tombstones of Frankish knights and ladies. In the west there appears the white dome of the Arab Ahmed Mosque, where a hair of the Prophet's beard is preserved in a casket of mother-of-pearl, and is shown to the faithful once a year. Only a few hundred yards to the north you see, as if etched against the Kyrenia Mountains, the slender traceries of the Church of S. Katharine, now the Haidar Pasha Mosque, the most graceful and perfect of the Gothic buildings of Cyprus. You realise also from this height what is not evident below — namely, that every house in Nicosia, however small, has its garden, hidden from the street by high walls of sun-dried mud bricks. From your eminence you see the town as a chequer-board of white and green, with towers and minarets for kings and queens, and the domes of mosques and Turkish baths for the lowlier pawns. And from the green squares there rises to meet you the heavy perfume of orange blossom, and the scent of jonquils and other wild flowers that are one of the joys of spring in Cyprus; from the

white, in winter time, when cold breezes from Taurus or snow-laden Olympus blow across the Mesaoria, the smoke of burning olive-wood, like incense faintly blue, mounts slowly upwards in fragrant coils.

Not far from S. Sophia are the bazaars of Nicosia, a network of narrow lanes, either vaulted or covered with matting or trellised vines. Here, as in other eastern towns, each trade has its separate street. You pass from a lane resounding with the blows of the coppersmiths to the silent quilt-makers' bazaar; thence through the slipper-makers' and grocers' streets to the booths of the sweetmeat-sellers, and to the street of the silversmiths, which ends at S. Nicholas of the English. The bazaars are full of life and colour, and the grocers' street in particular is crowded with people in every variety of dress, jostling and struggling to secure their tomatoes and egg-plants and colocass[1] and fruit. Here and there the traffic is diverted by the *türbé*, or tomb, of some Moslem worthy, lying across the road under the shade of a fig-tree, immutably preserved in mortmain. Occasionally the tinkle of bells announces the passage of a string of camels, and the crowd parts with difficulty to allow these truly Oriental beasts to rumble by, swaying gently from side to side. Many an arch reveals glimpses of spacious *khans*, where villagers find shelter for themselves and their animals when they come to the capital with their wares. "Sometimes in the crowded bazaar," says Mallock in one of the most eloquent chapters of 'In an Enchanted Island,' "the eye would suddenly catch the crags of the far-off mountains; and constantly in some narrow, shadowy street, where the tops of the houses were black with their projecting roofs, I stood arrested by the sight of the blue sky at the end of it—an oblong of *lapis lazuli* inlaid with a dark cypress tree."

Long may the ancient charm of Nicosia prevail against the indifference and iconoclasm of her citizens, grown rich through the war, and desirous of new lamps for old.

Although the majority in Nicosia's population of 17,000 souls has now passed to the Orthodox, the town retains, where it is not Gothic, much of the Turkish character which three centuries of Turkish rule had impressed upon it. For reasons which will be stated later, the Orthodox, until recently, have kept architecturally in the background. Their churches are low, and are built in inconspicuous

[1] The colocass (*Colocasia antiquorum*) is the vegetable known in South Africa as the "elephant plant." Of the egg-plant or *aubergine*, mixed with onions, the Turks make an excellent stew known as *Imam bayildi*, which means "the Imam fainted." The name implies that the Imam, on first tasting the dish, fainted with joy at its deliciousness. According to another derivation, however, the Imam, who was a parsimonious soul, fainted with grief on observing the amount of butter which his wife had lavished upon the stew.

places; their bells are seldom tolled, while the muezzin's mournful but melodious cadence floats down from a score of minarets five times in the twenty-four hours. On Moslem festivals, such as the two Bairams and Mevlid, the Prophet's birthday, the atmosphere of Nicosia is more Turkish even than usual. The arrival of the feast is announced on its eve by the firing of salutes from the walls, and Turks in holiday attire begin to fill the streets. The dress of the Turkish countryman of Cyprus is perhaps the most attractive of all Turkish costumes; alas, that town-bred Turkish boys of the younger generation, even those of the peasant class, are beginning to discard it in their foolish ambition to garb themselves *alla franca*. Stockings of brilliant hue, embellished with birds or equally startling devices; short knee-breeches of dazzling white, immensely baggy; a *qawush-durmá*, or tightly-fitting sleeved jacket of magenta, yellow, or apple-green velvet, and a silken scarf of many colours wound about the waist, constitute the equipment; villagers often add a flowered muslin handkerchief, worn round the base of the fez. Sometimes men of a certain substance wear breeches of heavy blue broadcloth (*shalwar*) instead of the white *vraka*, and a *yelek*, or double-breasted embroidered waistcoat, in the place of the *qawushdurmá*. On these days, too, the Turkish women abandon their habitual black or white cotton *charshaf*[1] for the brightest of silks, as they gather on the ramparts by the Paphos Gate to watch the *jerid* match in the moat below. On such an occasion as this the sight that meets the eye of a spectator on the Roccas bastion is of a picturesqueness not often to be found in these days. In the moat, in the space bounded by two well-preserved Venetian bastions, two teams of zaptiehs (military police), mounted on their small but spirited ponies, are competing in the ancient Persian game of javelin-throwing, for all the world like medieval knights jousting at a tourney. The ramparts themselves, from bastion to bastion, are lined with serried rows of Turkish ladies, a brilliant splash of blue and crimson, orange and purple silk. Above them rises an irregular row of white houses, green-shuttered and red-tiled; in the background looms the Kyrenia range, peculiarly beautiful when the declining sun incarnadines its rocks and illumines with deep glow its scattered patches of forest. The spectacle is seen at its best, perhaps, from the windows of my own house on the ramparts. From one side of this old Turkish qonaq of the seventeenth century you survey not only the moat, but the wide plain of the Mesaoria, bounded on

[1] *Lit.* a sheet: the garment, covering head and dress, worn out of doors by Turkish women who have not adopted European or semi-European fashions.

the south by snow-clad Olympus; from the other you look over the domes, towers, and minarets of the half-Gothic, half-eastern little town to the medieval castle perched on the precipitous summit of Buffavento, to the five-fingered peak of Pentedactylos, and to the final eminences of the Kyrenia Mountains as they tail away into the Karpass peninsula above Famagusta. And it is from this eastern side that you may behold, on the nights of a Moslem *festa*, a sight of unwonted loveliness. After the sun has set the domes of the mosques and the balconies of the minarets are garlanded with rows of little lamps, and their concentric circles of light reveal the outlines of the buildings with enchanting and fitful glimmer. From every quarter their flickering gleam shines faintly out of the darkness, while over all else there floats, like a thread of radiant gossamer, a line of fairy lights suspended between the towers of S. Sophia.

The end of Ramazan, the month of fasting, is marked by a three days' feast known as the lesser or "Sheker" (sugar) Bairam, which is followed after an interval of about seventy days by the greater or Qurban Bairam. Qurban Bairam is a lunar feast, falling ten days to the minute after the appearance of the new moon; and it is the duty of pious Moslems to report to the Qadi the instant the crescent has been discerned in the sky, so that he may proclaim that the festival is at hand.[1] Qurban Bairam commemorates Abraham's unconsummated sacrifice, whose intended victim, according to Moslem belief, was Ishmael, not Isaac: in memory of this event every Turkish family that can afford it must kill the *qurban*, the sacrificial sheep whose fleece has been dyed vermilion, for distribution to the household and to the poor. Bairam celebrations begin on its eve with the salutes and illuminations aforesaid. On the morrow the men attend service in the mosque, and then repair to the cemetery to recite the *Fatiha* over the graves of their dead. Religious obligations are now satisfied, and for the ensuing four days the faithful devote themselves to recreation and rejoicings. In the Qonaq Square of Nicosia swings and merry-go-rounds have been erected, sweetmeat-sellers and vendors of sherbet have set up their booths; and here the young disport themselves, while their fathers and elder brothers look on from the coffee-shops with which one side of the square is lined. Many a domestic comedy may then be witnessed by the observant. At one end a small boy, glittering with all the colours of the rainbow, declines to come home when summoned by his parents to

[1] I once inquired of a Turk in Paphos on what date Bairam would fall. "I cannot say for certain," he replied; "we are expecting Bairam by telegraph from Nicosia."

do so. His mother coaxes him with words of endearment: "*gel, janum*, come, my soul—*quzum*, my lamb—*iki gyözüm*, my two eyes," and, finally, with the appealing "*jigher kyöshem*, O, corner of my liver!" At another an angry matron apostrophises her offspring, who defies her from the sanctuary of the merry-go-round, with an infuriated "*qarn aghrisi*, you little belly-ache!"

Between the Qonaq Square and the Paphos Gate lies one of the oldest quarters of Nicosia, a quarter inhabited uninterruptedly since the days of the Lusignans by a small colony of Armenians. Denominated "Armenia" in the medieval chronicles of Cyprus, and so called even now by its inhabitants, this corner of Nicosia conceals behind high but tottering walls some dilapidated mansions of great age and bygone splendour. Graceful arcades, that might collapse at any moment, surround the inner courts of what once were palaces; within, ceilings and galleries sumptuously carved and painted crumble slowly into ruin. Narrow and tortuous lanes twist in and out of the quarter; and here and there from its sadly neglected gardens rises a secular cypress, noble and upright, its bronze green tones reminiscent, when seen against the turquoise sky, of the colours on an ancient Persian tile. In the midst of this "Armenia," however, there is a Turkish *enclave;* for here, oddly enough, was the family residence and early home of Mehmed Kiamil Pasha, the greatest Cypriote and most distinguished Ottoman statesman of modern times.

The precise date of Kiamil's birth is uncertain. One obituary notice in the English press gave it as 1826, the year of the extinction of the Janissaries by Sultan Mahmud II.; and, despite the mental and physical alertness which Kiamil preserved to the very end, there was latterly in his eyes a look of unutterable age which lent that theory support. According to the Cyprus newspaper 'Qibris,' he was born in A.H. 1248—that is, A.D. 1831; but the old Turkish registers of births and deaths in Cyprus are very incomplete, and can give the statement no corroboration. The only information they afford on the subject is in connection with the census of the island made by the Ottoman Government some time between 1861 and 1878, wherein Kiamil Pasha's mother, Penbé 'Abdu'llah, is stated to be living in the Mahmud Pasha quarter of Nicosia, and to have been born in A.H. 1213 (A.D. 1797). His father, one Salih Agha of Pyroi in the Nicosia district, was, we know, at the time of Kiamil's birth a captain of artillery, and was evidently a man free from prejudice, since he sent his son to be educated at the Greek school in Nicosia. From Cyprus young Kiamil passed to Cairo, obtained a position in the household of the Pasha of Egypt, and, in the course of a European tour

on which he accompanied one of the Pasha's sons, visited London during the Great Exhibition of 1851. Kiamil's sojourn in England confirmed his ripening admiration for this country and for its genius: thenceforth, having full command of English, he followed the English Press assiduously to the end of his life; thenceforth, to the end of his career, he sought zealously the friendship of England for his country. He cherished deep affection for the British Royal Family, and especially for King Edward, to whom he was warmly attached.

In 1860 Kiamil exchanged the service of 'Abbas I. for that of the Ottoman Government; and for the ensuing nineteen years—that is to say, until he first entered the Turkish Cabinet—filled an astonishing number of administrative appointments in every part of the empire. He held such diverse posts as Qaimaqam, Auditor, Director of Evqaf, Mutesarrif, and Vali; he governed, or helped to govern, several provinces, such as Eastern Rumelia, Herzegovina, Kossovo, and his native Cyprus, whose administration has long since passed out of Turkish hands. Yet he was not personally ambitious, although he rose rapidly. To an acquaintance of mine, who met him when he was Mutesarrif of Chios in 1875, and expressed astonishment that a man of his talents should be content with so unimportant a post, he replied that he found Chios a healthy and an attractive place to live in, and that he was satisfied to remain where he was. He was, above all things, a patriot, the most ready of his fellow-countrymen to accept responsibility and to undertake thankless tasks; nor had he long to wait for these. From 1885, when for the first time he became Grand Vizier (in succession to Küchük Said, who survived him by less than four months), until the tragic *coup d'état* of the 23rd of January 1913, Kiamil's career is almost contemporary history; it is, at all events, too well known to need recapitulation here. Suffice it to say, that on the 1st May 1913, after a sojourn of three months in Egypt, he returned to his beloved native isle for relief from the cares of State, saddened by his inability to avert from his country the dangers which encompassed her.

It was now generally supposed that the ex-Grand Vizier would travel no more; but after a stay of three weeks in Nicosia he surprised every one by leaving Cyprus for Constantinople. His opponents were then in power, and his unexpected return to the capital was the cause of some apprehension to his friends. It is possible that he intended to go no farther than Smyrna, where some of his properties were situated, and that, owing to an outbreak of cholera at that port, the steamer was compelled to proceed to Constantinople without calling there. At all events, his presence in the capital was unwelcome to the Young Turk

Government, and two days after his arrival he was once more on his way to Cyprus.

The date of his final return to the island coincided with that of the assassination of Mahmud Shevket Pasha, his successor in the Grand Vizierate. Shevket was shot on the 11th of June; Kiamil landed at Famagusta on the following day. Shevket's death was regarded by many as a retribution for the murder of Nazim Pasha in January; but the indignation which it evoked among his followers reacted on those who were not in sympathy with the Committee of Union and Progress. It led to a considerable exodus from the capital, and among the *émigrés* were the members of Kiamil Pasha's family, who in due course joined the old man in Nicosia. Here, surrounded by children and grandchildren, Kiamil spent the declining months of his life, evoking memories of his distant youth in the home from which he had been absent so long. He took the keenest interest in the development of Cyprus under British rule, and was full of praise for all he saw. He would make expeditions to Larnaca and Kyrenia, would wander alone about the streets of Nicosia and go unattended to the Turkish bath, or would receive visitors in the *selamlik* of his house, sitting on the divan with his legs tucked beneath him.

For in dress, dignity of manner, and deportment Kiamil Pasha was a Turk of the old school. Unlike those of his compatriots, who have been denationalised by long visits to Berlin, he was not ashamed to adhere to his country's customs. To the end of his days he wore the old-fashioned Stambuli frock-coat, with upturned collar, and squatting on the sofa, would clap his hands for his eunuch to bring coffee for the visitors; in the intervals of conversation he took snuff from a little gold snuff-box. He had a way of muttering rapidly in his beard, which made him difficult to follow, whatever language he was speaking; but he knew English and French perfectly, and to the last his intellect was unclouded. Shortly before his death he wrote me a letter in his own hand, in faultless English; eight days before he died he was dining at Government House with the High Commissioner of Cyprus, and expressed a hope to revisit London in the following summer. The end came quite suddenly, at seven o'clock in the morning of the 14th of November 1913. He died of syncope, while engaged in his morning correspondence, and was buried that afternoon, in a grave dug, by special permission of the Government, in the court of the Arab Ahmed Mosque, near to his house.

Truly Turkish in its contrasts and vicissitudes had been Kiamil Pasha's career and life, and truly Turkish was his burial. After a service in S. Sophia, the coffin was borne through tortuous streets and beneath overhanging lattices to its last resting-

place, followed by the highest and lowest in the island. Crowding upon the High Commissioner, the principal British officials, and the Moslem dignitaries, the rabble of the town struggled and pushed, instigated partly by curiosity, partly by the hope of being able for a moment or so to take part in the bearing of the coffin. And as the procession approached the Arab Ahmed Mosque with its swaying burden, a flower-seller, dressed in the voluminous white breeches of the Turkish peasant of Cyprus, and with bare legs and slippers, joined the throng, laid aside the tray of violets he had brought into the bazaar for sale, and put his shoulder under the coffin. It was the Grand Vizier's nephew, his sister's son, who grows flowers and vegetables in the neighbouring village of Devterá, and had come into the town that afternoon to ply his trade. He encountered the procession accidentally, unaware of his uncle's death; but when he learned who was being carried to burial, he took his place as a matter of course, and no one thought his participation strange. For if Turkey is — or was — an autocracy, it is in some respects the most striking of democracies. It can give rank, honour, and position to a man, but not to his descendants: a poor Turk, or one of humble birth, becomes Vizier or Mushir as easily as a Stambuli Effendi. The Turk need not be less a gentleman because he wears peasant's clothes, nor a *parvenu* because he has reached eminence by a long ladder.

There is a Greek verb familiar to us from our schooldays, λανθάνειν, "to escape notice," which suggests very accurately the policy long pursued by the rulers of the Orthodox Church in Turkey as regards the character of their places of worship. They did not, it is true, burrow underground in emulation of the early Christians, but like English nobles in the days of Henry the Eighth's "benevolences," they found it prudent to avoid the appearance of undue wealth. Thus the seat of the Œcumenical Patriarch, the Phanar, in Constantinople, is externally of an amazing insignificance, considering that it is in a sense the Vatican of Orthodoxy: in the Phanar the policy of "escaping notice" finds its most complete expression. In Cyprus the danger lay in another quarter, but the result was the same. Here it was not Moslem, but Latin, rapacity which was dreaded by the Orthodox: the brutal manner in which the Church of the Lusignans and the Venetians subordinated, almost suppressed, the native Church of the Cypriotes explains the humble appearance of the Orthodox shrines of the island built between the date of the *Bulla Cypria* and that of the Turkish conquest. Outward ostentation, in size or ornament, was sedulously avoided; any display in which the builders could afford to indulge was confined to internal embellishment. Thus

S. John the Almoner, the Orthodox cathedral of Nicosia, is well lined with frescoes, but has the dimensions of a private chapel rather than of a metropolitan church; the older Orthodox parish churches, such as Hagios Antonios and the Chrysaliniótissa, are carefully concealed from view among the intricacies of an eastern town. In recent years the inevitable reaction has set in, with results artistically deplorable. There is a suburb of Nicosia, Qaimaqli by name, which is inhabited principally by masons, and the Qaimaqli masons have evolved a style of ecclesiastical architecture of their own. This style, it is scarcely necessary to observe, displays all the showy vulgarity of modern Levantine taste, and its examples, unhappily, are being disseminated in every part of the island. With increased prosperity due to the British occupation there is hardly a Christian village that has not enlarged or rebuilt its church within the last thirty years, yet instead of adhering to the Byzantine models which it has at hand—models not demonstrative, perhaps, but eminently pleasing to the eye—it prefers to indulge in the garish product of Qaimaqli. Nicosia within the walls has hitherto remained immune; not so, however, its surroundings. Qaimaqli itself boasts a particularly aggressive specimen, built as an advertisement *pour encourager les autres;* and Hagioi Homologitai (the Holy Confessors), the suburb at the other extremity of the town, is likewise a victim. Hagioi Homologitai is architecturally unfortunate also in other respects, for within its limits is situated the uninspired block of buildings containing the Government offices and the council-chamber of the Cyprus Legislature. The latter is of truly Spartan simplicity, both within and without; on the other hand it enshrines at the opening of the annual session, or enshrined until the war placed ceremonial in abeyance, a medley of formal dress so remarkable and so interesting that its own lack of splendour is unnoticed. Probably at no other official function in the world which is held under British auspices are there gathered together so many picturesque and diverse elements as are convened on this occasion within its walls.

The members of this Council, now summoned to hear the opening speech of the High Commissioner of the island, are composed of three different sections. There are in all eighteen members, part of whom are elected, part non-elected; and the latter consist of six British officials, who sit either *ex officio* or by nomination. Of the elected members three are Turks, chosen by their compatriots to represent the Turkish element in Cyprus; and nine are Greek Christians, chosen by the Greek Christian community. A horseshoe table, covered with green baize, occupies the body of the room; and the official members, who are seated in the middle, divide the Turks on the right wing from

the Greek Christians on the left. Raised a step above the floor is the chair of the President of the Council, the High Commissioner of Cyprus, resplendent on such an occasion as this in Orders and gold. He is flanked on either side by the official members, who are arrayed in the blue British civil uniform; or in the case of the King's Advocate, the legal adviser of the Government, in the robes of a King's Counsel.

The Turkish members, departing from this uniformity, present considerable variety of dress. One of them most probably held, before the war, some official rank in the Ottoman Empire, a purely honorary distinction entailing no obligations, and in this event would wear the Turkish civil uniform of black and gold, the quantity of gold varying according to the ranks—fifteen in all, I believe—into which the Turkish hierarchy of civil officials is divided. Another may belong to the Khoja class—that is to say, to the semi-ecclesiastical category of those who have studied the Sacred Law—and consequently wears a black gown which descends to the ankles, and a white turban bound around his fez. Another, belonging to neither class, wears European evening dress and a fez. The Greek-Christian members are all in evening dress, a contrast to the mass of colour around them.

The dignitaries who in virtue of their position are invited to be present at the opening of Council, contribute even more than the members to the picturesqueness of the scene. Along the walls of the council-chamber chairs are ranged for the visitors, and nowhere but in Cyprus can be seen such interesting and piquant juxtapositions. There are the English Judges of the Supreme Court, in scarlet and full-bottomed wigs; there are their Eminences the Qadi and the Mufti of Cyprus, in the splendid dress worn by high officials of the Mohammedan Sheri' or ecclesiastical Courts. These Courts, in Cyprus, exercise jurisdiction over Mohammedans only; but the jurisdiction is a wide one, and may be likened to that of the English ecclesiastical Courts prior to the Reformation. There are nine ranks of Sheri' Court officials, ranging from the humble Muderis to the Sheikh-ul-Islam, and their gala dress increases in magnificence as they ascend the hierarchical ladder. As they are all of the Khoja class, their uniforms consist of variations on the gown and turban worn by the ordinary Khoja. On full-dress occasions the gowns of the lower ranks are blue, those of the higher ranks violet, and in the highest ranks, to which the Qadi of Cyprus belongs, the violet gown is heavily gold-embroidered. And over the white turban which binds the fez is laid a band of gold brocade, of varying width according to rank, with a tail of white linen, gold-tipped, hanging down the back.

Next to their Eminences are placed his Beatitude the Arch-

bishop of the Autocephalous Church of Cyprus and his Metropolitans, swathed in voluminous folds of black, in which can occasionally be discerned, as they move, their pectoral crosses of brilliants and other precious stones. With them, too, sits his All-Saintliness, the Abbot of Kykkos, head of the greatest and wealthiest of the eighty-two monasteries of Cyprus. Then comes the Bishop of the Maronites, in whose costume the twofold aspect of his Church, one of the Eastern Uniat Churches, is manifested. His cassock and stockings of *pavonazzo* silk proclaim the prelate of a Church in communion with Rome; his black headgear, resembling a "pork-pie" cap, shows that the Maronite Church retains something of her local Syrian usages. The Father Superior of the Franciscans and the Armenian Vicar-General represent two other religious bodies which have flocks in Cyprus.

The other side of the room is occupied by senior officials of the Government and their ladies, and by other distinguished visitors. Sitting cheek by jowl are the chaplain of the Church of England, in academic gown and hood, and the hereditary Sheikh of the Mevlevi Dancing Dervishes, in the stately garb and the tall bonnet of camel hair, encircled by a green turban, which he affects on solemn occasions. The scene provides a strange contrast of race and religion, illustrates a singular variety of civilisations; and the Turkish and Greek translators to the Council remind one, if reminder be needed, of the linguistic problems which the administration of Cyprus involves.

As Qaimaqli is a village of masons, so is Hagioi Homologitai a village of washerwomen. Its single street, which stretches for precisely a mile westward from the Paphos Gate, houses laundress after laundress; and even the *papadiá*, the wife of the parish priest, follows the general calling, while the *papas* her husband, a venerable grey-beard, spends most of his time at the door of his house darning his wife's washing. There is, indeed, nothing abnormal in this procedure. In the Orthodox Church the secular priest, who must be married and is therefore ineligible for the hierarchy unless he should chance to become a widower, is generally a rude and unpretentious person, principally occupied in seeking to supplement his meagre pittance for the support of his numerous brood. No task however menial is beneath his dignity; indiscriminately he ploughs and preaches, celebrates the liturgy and tills his field. In Salonika I have seen priests in charge of tobacco shops and selling newspapers in the streets; at Mudros, in 1915, monks peddled Turkish delight and chocolate to the Allied troops. At Amiantos, near Troödos, a priest used to work as a labourer in the asbestos mine, his bonnet on his head and his ragged cassock tucked inside baggy blue breeches. Darning linen is rather a refined form of employment for

an Orthodox vicar's leisure hours.

Immediately above Hagioi Homologitai begin the grounds of Government House, the residence of the High Commissioner. The house itself can scarcely be called imposing. Though a stone porch and cloister have been added in recent years, it is fundamentally a wooden structure, capable of being taken to pieces and packed away in boxes. Indeed, when Sir Garnet Wolseley landed in Cyprus in 1878, it is said to have been at Port Said on its way to some destination in India, and to have been diverted to Cyprus by telegraph, as no house could be found in Nicosia suitable for the Queen's representative. Its situation, however, is delightful, and the views from its grounds superb. The eminence on which it stands — now known to the Turks as *Vali Pasha tepesi*, "The Governor's Hill," — is believed to have been the site of King Richard's encampment, and admirably commands the town. A young pine forest has grown up around it, adding greatly to its amenities; and in the terraced gardens orange-trees and cypresses mingle with medieval arches and other fragments salved from vanished churches and the old Qonaq. Its western boundary is the bed of the river Pedias, on whose farther bank lies a flourishing *metochi*, or dependency, of the monastery of Kykkos. The buildings of this monastic farm are of little interest, for the *metochi* is bucolic rather than ecclesiastical, its purpose to produce grain and fruit for the parent house on the spurs of Olympus. It possesses, however, some delightful gardens, and an avenue of the tallest cypresses in the island, leading into open country and to a succession of low flat-topped hills. From these should be seen the old town of Turks, Venetians, and Crusaders, bathed at evening in the glow of sunset, and the Kyrenia Mountains fading into the distance in the direction of the Syrian coast.

THE BENCH AND BAR OF ENGLAND.

BY J. A. STRAHAN.

I. JUDGES AND JUDGES.

To the layman every judge is equally a judge; but to the lawyer there are judges and judges. There are some judges whose ruling on any moot point of law is taken as settling it for ever: there are others who, to use Lord Ellenborough's phrase, are fit only to rule copybooks. The strange thing is that the great judges are as often as not found among those who have obtained promotion to the bench by favour; while the small judges are not unfrequently found among those who have earned their promotion by success in practice. There are two modes of succession known to the law: succession *per stirpes*, or by the family, and succession *per capita*, or by the head. Lord Westbury, in his sardonic way, once said that persons bearing a certain name well known in the legal world, succeeded to places on the Bench *per stirpes* and not *per capita*. To a certain extent that was true, since few of that name ever won much reputation at the Bar; yet it might be said that scarcely one of them who obtained promotion ever failed to win a reputation on the Bench. The qualities required to gain success as a judge and as an advocate are essentially different; and it is but rarely that you find them both combined in the same person.

For instance, nothing is more necessary to success as an advocate than self-confidence: possibly nothing has led judges into more or worse errors than that same quality. It is a common saying that the fifteen years which a judge must serve to qualify for a retiring pension may roughly be divided, as ancient Gaul was, into three parts. During the first five years, the judge is always afraid he is wrong; during the second, he is always sure he is right; and during the third, he does not care twopence whether he's wrong or right. But in fact some judges, from the day they are preferred, are always sure they are right—so sure indeed that they will not listen to any argument or evidence which tends to show that they are wrong. Such men are often called by the lay press and public "strong" judges. Many of these so-called strong judges have had reputations among lawyers which no man need envy. It is not too much to say that one of them, who died not long ago and whose name was never mentioned in the daily papers without unrestrained praise, was regarded by the counsel practising before him as nothing less than a perverter of justice. Many a

rogue, who attracted his favour by cleverness or impudence, escaped the punishment he richly deserved; and many an honest man was ruined through his practical refusal to listen to his case. Fortunately for litigants there have been few English judges quite so "strong" as ——.

Weak judges do far less mischief than strong judges of this sort. The mischief they do is not in the perversion, so much as in the degradation, of justice. It does not conduce to the dignity of justice to have a judge constantly overborne in his own court by masterful counsel. There was in Henry Brougham's time a certain judge so much under the influence of Pollock, afterwards Lord Chief Baron, that when Pollock and Brougham were pitted against each other before him, Brougham used to appeal to Pollock not to rule on any point until, at any rate, the judge had an opportunity of submitting a few observations for his consideration. That was a gentle reminder to the judge that he was not quite master in his own court. A brutal one was the retort of General Butler of the American Bar. He was one of several counsel appearing in a case, all of whom agreed in disregarding the very existence of the judge. At last his honour in desperation cried out, "Gentlemen, gentlemen, what am I here for?" Butler paused and pondered. Then, passing his hand over his forehead, he said, "By the holy, your honour has me there!"

Perhaps, however, the weak judge does less to degrade justice than the "judicial humourist." The judicial humourist has rarely a greater sense of humour than his graver brethren: he has merely a lesser sense of dignity. He is always on the look out for the chance of making a joke; and very often he ends in joking, not merely decorum, but justice itself out of his court. His object is to create a laugh, and seldom does his joke fail to do that, and as seldom does it succeed in doing anything more: it reads but poorly in print, looking in that cold medium too like the jest, not of a wit, but of a buffoon. Probably the three most witty men on the English Bench in recent years were Lord Chief-Justice Coleridge, Lord Bowen, and Lord Macnaghten (if one wishes to enjoy a remarkable display of humour, learning, and literature, he cannot do better than study the judgment of Lord Macnaghten in *Van Grutten* v. *Foxwell* [1897], A.C. 658). But nobody ever regarded any of them as a judicial humourist. They never forgot that the business of a judge is a grave one; and they transacted it gravely.

It is the view of the public that the mere elevation of a barrister to the Bench gives him learning, whether he possessed any before it or not. The view of the law itself is not very different. The late Owen Meredith once said that the King could accomplish things beyond the power of Heaven itself; and, when asked

for an example, he stated that the King, by making her husband a knight, had made a certain woman a lady. In the same way the King, by making him a judge, can make an unlearned lawyer an authority on law. But though the King can make the world accept an unlearned lawyer for learned, he cannot give him learning. And judges, however blind they may be to their own imperfections, are, as Lord Bowen put it, deeply conscious of each others' deficiencies. Lord Justice Christian, when he was Chief of the Irish Court of Appeal, used to display this consciousness in his own way. When his two colleagues differed in opinion, each of them stated his decision and his reasons for it before the Chief; and, when the Chief gave his, it sometimes took this laconic but not flattering form: "I agree with the decision of my brother on the right for the reasons so admirably stated by my brother on the left." And counsel, too, sometimes show their views of the learning of the Bench in nearly as uncomplimentary a way. Every one remembers the reply of the oldest and most learned lawyer of his time, Serjeant Maynard, to the brutal observation of Judge Jeffreys, that he had grown so old he had forgotten his law. "It is true I have grown old and have forgotten some of my law," replied the ancient Serjeant; "indeed I have forgotten more than your lordship ever knew; and I have not forgotten much." A young counsel displayed his opinion of the learning of the Bench as clearly if not as consciously. He had argued a case, and to his surprise and indignation the judge decided it against him. He appealed, and when opening his case in the Court of Appeal, he began by stating and explaining at great length some most elementary legal principles. At last the judges became impatient; and one of them said, mildly enough, "Don't you think, Mr Smith, you might assume that the Court knows some law?" "No, no, my lord," answered the young barrister hastily; "that was just the mistake I made in the court below."

As to the moral conduct of judges a *laudator temporis acti* once summed up to me the difference between the judges of former days and those of our own. He said that formerly judges, when on the Bench, never forgot they were judges, and when not on the Bench, never remembered it; but now judges, when on the Bench, never remember they are judges, and when not on the Bench, never forget it. Being, as I say, a *laudator temporis acti*, he professed his preference for the old style. Certainly his statement was accurate to this extent: it is rarely nowadays that a judge when off the Bench forgets that he is a judge. The old habits of free living, and especially free drinking, which characterised alike the Bench and the Bar of a hundred years ago, arose largely

through the circuit system, which then turned judges and counsel for half the legal year into sets of roving, homeless bachelors. At the beginning of an assize, then, they closed their courts and chambers, packed their traps, and went off to the country, not to return to their wives and families for several months, and while away they lived a free and easy and most convivial life. The railways and the growth of local Bars have put an end to all that. Now counsel from London run up by an early train on commission day to the county town where they hope to get briefs; if they get any they remain till they are disposed of; if they find the local Bar have got them, they return the next day to town. Thus one will frequently find a hundred barristers assembled at circuit mess on the first night reduced to half a dozen on the second or third.

Lord Morris used to tell a story which was an echo of past days and ways. He was driving from Galway to his family seat at Spiddal, when he passed an acquaintance who was chatting by the roadside to an ancient road-mender. The judge saluted his friend. When he had disappeared the ancient road-mender asked the friend, "And who, now, might that gintleman be, sor?" The friend said, "He's Lord Morris, the judge." "And ye tell me he's a judge, sor," commented the ancient road-mender in a reflective way. "Ye tell me he's a judge. Well, I've seen him, man and boy, dhriving along this road these fifty years, and I niver saw him wance the worse for dhrink. And ye tell me he's a judge."

One of the most remarkable characteristics of the English Bench—and Bar too for that matter—is its hearty welcome to ability, come from whence it may. In that respect London resembles Rome: among the great names of Roman jurisconsults none were greater than Scævola, Papinianus, and Ulpianus; and yet none of these were Romans. In the same way there are no greater names among English nineteenth-century lawyers than Cairns in Equity and Willes in Common Law; and yet the first hailed from Belfast and the second from Cork. In Equity Jessel may be a rival to Cairns: at any rate, he thought so himself. My wife's uncle, the late Sir Alfred Dryden, who read in the same chambers as he, told me that towards the end of his career he used to say in his own English, "'Istory will sy that the three greatest Chancery men were 'Ardwicke, Cairns, and me." If history does say that, then Hardwicke will be the only Englishman, for Jessel was a Jew. At this moment the Lord High Chancellor of Great Britain is a Scotsman, who succeeded another Scotsman (Viscount Haldane), who himself succeeded a third Scotsman (the Earl of Loreburn), who in turn succeeded that venerable Irishman, the Earl of Halsbury, in that great

office; and the Lord Chief Justice of England is a Jew like Jessel.

This generous disregard of prejudice, national or religious, strikes every one accustomed to the narrower provincial feeling in Scotland and Ireland. Lord Morris, shortly after he was appointed one of the Law Lords, was asked what he thought of the supreme tribunal. He answered, "I think the English are a long-suffering people. There is the highest Court in their Empire, and what does it consist of? Why, three Irishmen, two Scotchmen, and a miserable ould Jew." The disrespectful description was intended to apply to the late learned Lord Herschell, C.

II. JUDGES AND COUNSEL.

The lay public think that the qualification for becoming a judge is to have become a distinguished leader of the Bar. This is a mistake: there are many distinguished leaders of the Bar who will never be judges; and there are many judges who were never distinguished leaders of the Bar. The only qualification for the Bench known to the law is to be a barrister of ten years' standing: all the rest depends upon the Lord High Chancellor: what further qualifications he may require depends upon his individual idiosyncrasies. Lord Lyndhurst openly stated the principle on which he proceeded. "When I want a judge," he said, "I look round the Bar for a gentleman; and, if he knows a little law, so much the better." That was, perhaps, as good a principle of selection as is possible, considering all the circumstances. At any rate, it is better than that followed by a later Chancellor. "People say that my last three appointments to the Bench are a public scandal," he said indignantly. "Well, all I can say is this: it would, in my opinion, have been a much greater public scandal if three respectable, straight-voting county M.P.'s had had to end their careers in the Court of Bankruptcy."

Once, however, a counsel becomes a judge, the lay public, whatever they thought of him when at the Bar, take him at his face value. I have already pointed out that the law does much the same, since his opinion on points of law, which before his elevation were probably not thought worth five guineas apiece, are, after his elevation, absolute declarations of the law binding upon the whole realm save and except the Court of Appeal and the House of Lords. Considering this, it is hardly to be wondered at that the barrister, when made a judge, should himself commonly take the same view as to the effect of his exaltation. That view is not, however, by any means universally shared by his old companions at the Bar. Some-

times this difference in opinion leads to a little friction between judges and counsel. I remember once a newly appointed judge, whose career at the Bar had been far from illustrious, having the folly to tell the late Sir Charles Russell that his cross-examination of a witness was wearisome and pointless. The greatest cross-examiner in England glared at his lordship in speechless amazement for a moment; and then he replied fiercely, "Oblige me by holding your silly tongue until somebody speaks to you." That was a rude way of showing a judge what counsel thought of him. Curran's way was more civil and also more effective. He was addressing the jury, and the judge irritated him by constantly shaking his head to indicate to the jury that he did not agree with what was being said. "Gentlemen of the jury," commented Curran at last, "you may have noticed his lordship shaking his head. I ask you to pay no attention to it; because, if you were as well acquainted with his lordship as I am, you would know that when he shakes his head there is nothing in it."

This will show that judges are sometimes noted for want of judgment. Not so often they are also noted for want of manners. Where this fault displays itself, it is usually before long corrected by the Bar. The inexperienced junior may tremble under the rough tongue of the judge; but the experienced and established leader contrives to repay in kind, sometimes in a measure brim full, pressed down, and flowing over. That was the case in an encounter between the late Oswald, K.C., and an unlearned and underbred judge. (By the way, Oswald was the author of a treatise on "Contempt of Court," which, his fellow-barristers insisted, was all based on personal experience.) The unlearned and underbred judge, after a tussle with Oswald, had announced angrily that he could teach him neither law nor manners. "I respectfully agree, my lord," answered Oswald blandly; "you could teach nobody either." And it was Sir Charles Russell who, when a judge from the Chancery side who knew not Russell, rudely interrupted him again and again, threw down his brief and said, "My lord, what may be the manners of the place from whence you came I know not; but I do know that on this side the judges treat the Bar as gentlemen, and, as long as I am of the Bar, I will submit to be treated in no other way." Without more, he left the court. The judge hastily sent a messenger after him; and when he came back humbly apologised, and interrupted no more.

At the same time the bearing of the average counsel towards the judge is usually so deferential as to verge on the abject. The reason of this is not, as a rule, want of courage to stand up to the judge: it is regard of the

counsel for his own interests. Solicitors dislike counsel who quarrel with the judge, unless they are men big and strong enough to crush him. Nothing will persuade them that the decision of a case very often depends not so much on the evidence and arguments submitted to, as on the feelings entertained by, the judge. Accordingly, if a barrister, not at the top of the Bar, gets the reputation among them of being personally objectionable to the Bench or any considerable portion of it, his practice is as good as ruined. This is very unfair to counsel, and still more unfair to judges. Most experienced barristers know that rarely indeed does any judge allow his likes or dislikes of counsel personally to affect his judgment in cases in which such counsel appears. Far more frequently that judgment is affected by the kind of work in which that counsel is retained. If judges observe that a certain barrister frequently appears in shady cases or for shady clients, they look with suspicion and distrust on any business in which he is engaged.

While few judges are either ill-natured or ill-mannered, not a few of them are ill-tempered, or, rather, what is commonly known as "peppery." It is true some judges are, if anything, over good-tempered. It used to be said of the late Mr Justice Lawrance — affectionately known on the Midland Circuit as "Long Lawrance" — that he was of so amiable a disposition that nothing could exasperate him except a point of law. Such judges, however, are rarely of the first flight. Most competent men are, especially when growing a bit old, a bit peppery. Usually this pepperiness is confined to one or two points which counsel, who are accustomed to appear before them, know well and take care to avoid. For instance, there was no judge of his time with a kinder heart or a better head than the late Lord Esher, for many years Master of the Rolls; but he was very peppery on points. One of these points was the way some counsel have of citing cases so rapidly that they are discussing a new case before the court has had time to consider the effect of the previous one. Once a hurried and nervous counsel was arguing before Lord Esher, and citing case after case in support of his argument so quickly that Lord Esher quite lost his bearings. Counsel always gave his references to the cases cited as so-and-so "Q.B.D." At length Lord Esher demanded angrily, "What do you mean by Q.B.D.?" Counsel replied in amazement, "Why, my lord, Queen's Bench Division, of course." "Well," answered Lord Esher, gazing at him with indignant, burning eyes, "if you mean Queen's Bench Division, why don't you say Queen's Bench Division? When counsel keeps heaving at my head every second this Q.B.D. and that Q.B.D. and the other

Q.B.D., I feel inclined to say to him U.B.D."

As I have said, there was no kinder heart or better head on the Bench in his time than Lord Esher's; but he certainly was injured by his irascibility. Sometimes when I watched him fuming in court I was reminded of the story told by Gronow of a predecessor of his of a similar temper, Sir Pepper Arden, afterwards Lord Alvanley. Once, Gronow says, a Frenchman, who spoke no English, accompanied by an interpreter, visited Sir Pepper's court. Sir Pepper happened to be in a fiery state at the time. The Frenchman was startled by the heat he showed, and asked the interpreter his name. The interpreter, translating it literally from English into French, answered "*Le Chevalier Poivre Ardent.*" "*Parbleu,*" muttered the Frenchman, "*il est très bien nommé!*"

When a judge sits with colleagues, as Lord Esher did, his irascibility, especially if he is also an able man, has a worse influence on the Bench than on the Bar. It tends to cause the colleagues, who desire a quiet life, to acquiesce with the irascible one whenever they can do so without actually outraging their consciences, and to lead the colleagues who are fighters to seek for grounds for dissenting from him. While Lord Esher presided over the first division of the Court of Appeal, he had more than one coadjutor who might well have adopted the title which Lord Bowen said he intended to take when called to the House of Lords—that of Lord Concurry; while at least one of them might be properly described as a conscientious objector.

Just as every private of the great Napoleon's army carried a field-marshal's baton in his knapsack, so every member of the Bar of England wears under his black robe the ermine of a judge. And this operates entirely for the public benefit. The judge seldom forgets that he was once a barrister, and the barrister seldom forgets that he may one day be a judge. This solidarity inspires in both of them a sense of mutual confidence and reciprocal honour such as prevails in no other profession except perhaps the navy and army, and that sense facilitates business enormously, more especially on the Chancery side, where judge and counsel know one another more intimately than is possible in the larger and more varied world of the Common Law. Often on the Chancery side, when *ex parte* applications are made in important and complicated matters which, if discussed in detail, would occupy hours, all that passes between the judge and counsel is this: "Well, Mr Smith," the judge will say, "this is all right, I suppose?" "Quite right, my lord." "Take your order."

The judge trusts implicitly to the word of counsel, and his trust is never betrayed.

III. COUNSEL AND CLIENTS.

Some years ago, about a week or more before the commencement of one of our very long Long Vacations, I happened to meet a lay friend who was involved in a heavy action. I asked him how it was getting on, and he told me that his counsel had applied to have it heard before the Vacation, but the application had been refused by the court.

"This was very inconvenient for me," he added, "and I was annoyed at it; but not half so much as Jones," who was his leading counsel. "He told the judge plainly that it was grossly unfair to me, and was so vexed that he got into quite a temper."

Now, I knew Mr Jones. He was a man who never came into court without having read his brief; but he was certainly not a man I should suspect of losing his temper because his client was inconvenienced. So I asked my friend if Mr Jones had said anything to his junior.

"Well, yes," my friend replied; "he said he was glad he had made an exhaustive note of the case, as it would save him a lot of work when it came on again."

That explained "the grand choler of the Father" Jones. He had made up his brief laboriously, as he always did, and he was vexed at the delay, because he knew that by the end of the Vacation he should have forgotten all about it.

No man can get through a great leading practice at the Bar unless he not merely learns to learn quickly, but also learns to forget quickly what he has learned. So a young barrister friend of mine was taught at his first conference with the late Sir Charles Russell.

The junior counsel in an intricate case had suddenly died, and my friend was fortunate enough to get his brief. The case was one which raised many points, and had been already several times before the court. My friend had little time to make it up; but this did not disturb him, as Sir Charles, who was leading him, had argued the case on the occasions when it had been previously considered; and so, he assumed, was familiar with all the facts. At the conference, however, much to my friend's amazement, the first question which Sir Charles put to him, in his brusque peremptory way, was, "Well, what is this case all about?"

"Why, Sir Charles," replied my friend awkwardly, "I thought you would know more of it than I possibly can."

"I know nothing about it," said Sir Charles.

"But," persisted my friend, "you have argued it three times already."

"I tell you I know nothing about it," answered Sir Charles angrily. "If I remembered all the facts in all the cases I have been in, what sort of a thing

would my head be now, do you think?"

In fact, to be able to continue to learn quickly one must be able to forget as quickly; and lawyers who attain to great practices develop a power of acquiring and forgetting knowledge of all sorts of things—facts, figures, history, science, law—with a rapidity that amazes their coaches. In politics it is much the same. A friend of mine, who had a good deal to do in that way with the late Mr Joseph Chamberlain, told me that nothing astounded him so greatly as the quickness with which he mastered the ins and outs of all sorts of difficult and intricate questions, except the quickness with which he forgot all about them. Unfortunately for myself, I was never, either in law or politics, able to learn to forget.

This superficial knowledge of a subject is often acquired so intelligently and used so skilfully that counsel has the advantage over witnesses whose professional business is to know it. That is especially the case when the witnesses are medical men, who are usually the least expert of experts. As might be expected, however, when knowledge is "sweated up," as barristers call it, there are usually vast *lacunæ* in it, which, when discovered, reveal the abysmal ignorance which lies behind. I well remember an instance of such a revelation. It occurred in a patent case: the patent was for some electrical contrivance, and the late Lord Kelvin (then Sir William Thomson) was the chief witness for one side. He was being cross-examined by the leading counsel for the other side—a distinguished Q.C., whose extraordinary gift for grasping quickly abstruse scientific points brought him an immense practice in patent cases. He put his questions something in this way: "Now, Sir William, wouldn't you say 'so-and-so.'" "I wud," answered Sir William in his Northern accent. "And wouldn't you say that 'so-and-so' followed from that?" "I wud," answered Sir William. "And wouldn't you say that 'so-and-so' followed from that?" "I wud," answered Sir William. "And now, Sir William," put the Q.C. in a triumphant tone, "after what you have admitted, wouldn't you say that 'so-and-so' must of necessity follow from that?" Sir William paused before replying. Then he said slowly, "I wud—if I knew nothing about electricity; but I know a deal." In half a dozen sentences he explained how what of necessity followed was just the reverse of what his cross-examiner suggested. The distinguished Q.C. listened in silence, and, when the sentences were ended, showed his power of grasping quickly abstruse scientific points by sitting down without asking another question. I have often wondered what the subsequent interview between him and his coach was like.

But all this is something of a digression. The point I had in my mind when I referred to the conversation with my liti-

gant friend was to illustrate the manner in which lay clients, at any rate, will insist on confusing the man with the advocate. When a client, by his solicitor, retains counsel to plead his cause for him, he is simply employing for pay a man to do for him work in which that man has or is supposed to have special experience and skill. But nothing will induce the average client to view the transaction in that light. He will insist on thinking that when counsel strongly urges the justice of his cause, he is doing so not because he is paid to do it, but because he believes that the cause is just. He fancies, too, that counsel is as deeply interested in his cause as he is; feels the same anxiety as to the result as he does; and is as much concerned when that result proves unhappy. "Weel, weel, sir," a Scottish farmer said to his advocate, who was condoling with him on the hostile verdict of the jury—"Weel, weel, sir, I'm gey gled to be red o' it on ony terms, and if you hae spent as mony sleepless nichts ower it as I hae you'll be the same." It never occurred to the honest man that, if the advocate spent sleepless nights over every case which he conducted, he would soon not be in a condition to conduct cases at all.

Sometimes this dream of clients that their counsel believe implicitly in the justice of their cause has unexpected awakenings. The great Erskine was once defending in a murder case. The murder was a most atrocious one, and the prisoner was the murderer. Erskine defended him with his usual vigour and earnestness; his final address to the jury was particularly fervent and moving. Nevertheless a callous judge charged straight against the prisoner, and an equally callous jury promptly convicted him, and he was ordered to be hanged by the neck till he was dead, on the very next day, as the custom then was.

Convinced that Erskine believed in his innocence, the prisoner, before being removed from the dock, leant over the bar and whispered—

"Mr Erskine, Mr Erskine!"

"Well?" said Erskine.

"Mr Erskine, I have not received justice," said the prisoner.

"No," replied Erskine, "that's quite true; you have not received justice. But," he added cheerfully, "you'll get it all right to-morrow."

This confusion of the advocate with the man makes many clients fiercely distrustful of a counsel who, before the case comes into court, advises them that there is no chance of success. One striking instance of that feeling I have reason to remember. A large landowner, now deceased, who was himself of a quarrelsome nature, had the misfortune to grant a lease of one of his farms to a very quarrelsome tenant. The very quarrelsome tenant had an even more quarrelsome son, whom he appointed manager of the farm at a yearly salary. The son was

soon on fighting terms with the landlord, owing to his unreasonable claims and objections and general perverseness, until at length the landlord, by his agent, wrote telling him that he was not the tenant, but his father was, and that henceforth all communications must be made through the father. Shortly afterwards the son, having privately developed very strained relations with the father, wrote to the landlord offering to surrender the lease at the end of the current year; and the landlord, who now was on strained relations himself with the father, and eager to get rid of both of them, precipitately accepted the son's offer. It was some time before the father heard of the son's offer, and, when he did, he promptly quarrelled out and out with the son, expelled him from the farm, and gave the landlord notice that the son had no authority to surrender the lease. The landlord insisted that the lease had been surrendered, and that the farm must be given up at the end of the year. The tenant refused absolutely to give it up.

Counsel was instructed to advise whether on these facts the surrender was good. He advised that it was not. The next instructions which he received were to draft, on behalf of the landlord, a statement of claim in an action for possession of the farm. He drafted it, but put a note "in the fold" that, in his opinion, the action must fail, and he advised an attempt to settle. The landlord's solicitor saw him, told him he quite agreed that the action must fail; but they must go on with it, as the landlord swore that if the court did not turn out the (unmentionable) tenant, he himself would do so by force; and this would be a great scandal, since the landlord was Lord-Lieutenant of the county. The case went on. When ready for trial, an eminent K.C. was briefed to lead the counsel. The K.C., when he had perused his brief, agreed absolutely with his junior that there was no case; but there was then nothing for it but to fight it as best they could. They did so, and, as both of them expected, the action was dismissed. The landlord had the insolence to tell them that they had not tried to win it, because they had advised it would fail, and they wanted to justify their advice.

This is an extreme case. But something of the same kind is constantly occurring, —so constantly, that to my knowledge some leading juniors refuse to accept briefs where they have definitely advised that there is no case. But this, to young juniors who are only fighting their way into practice, requires a heroic sense of honour, since it may mean the loss of a client when clients are very few; and, accordingly, it is to be feared that some of the less conscientious of them sometimes affect a confidence in cases submitted to them which they do not really feel, and thus encourage clients to proceed

with actions which they privately regard as at least as likely to end in defeat as in victory.

While the tendency of the average lay client—and to a certain extent the solicitor—is to confuse the man with the advocate, the tendency of the public generally is to confuse the advocate with the man. The process of reasoning seems to be this: Because a barrister is willing to advocate professionally any private cause for which he is paid, so he is willing to advocate personally any public cause that is likely to pay him. This is an absolute *non sequitur*. It confuses the duty which he owes to his client with the duty which he owes to his country. Those duties are absolutely different. As an honest barrister, his duty to his client is to do his best for a private cause whether he thinks it right or wrong. As an honest citizen, his duty to his country is to do his best for a public cause only when he thinks it is right. To fail to do his best as a barrister because he thinks his client's cause is wrong, would be dishonourable. To do his best as a citizen because he thinks a public cause will profit him, would be dishonourable. And as Lord Erskine said a century ago (and he had, before he came to the Bar, served as an officer both in the Army and in the Navy), there is no profession in existence in which the standard of honour is higher than it is in the profession of the law.

It is this confusion of the advocate with the man which gives rise to the popular distrust of what are called lawyer politicians. That distrust is wholly impersonal, and rarely damages individual counsel who take to public life. In fact, the barrister is a very popular and successful candidate, no matter what party it is to which he attaches himself. This is largely due to his professional training. That training makes him anxious to hear all sides of a question before he decides which side is right. It was a lawyer (Sir James Stephen) who regretted that we had not the Serpent's version of the story of the Fall of Man; and it was a lay magistrate who wished he could decide cases without hearing the evidence for the defence, since when he heard that it so often bothered him. Again, their professional training tends to make them tolerant of the weaknesses, prejudices, and even follies of mankind. Often when a country gentleman or a business man would lose all patience and alienate still more his critics, a lawyer, by a good-natured jest or a genuine attempt to understand their point of view, will conciliate them. Was it not a lawyer, the Catholic counsel Keogh, who, at an Irish election, when a stout Protestant told him he would rather vote for the Devil than for him, gained his vote by the sweet reasonableness of his reply: "I quite see your difficulty," he said, "and can ask you

to support me only if your friend does not stand"?

I have already referred to the curious fact that clients think their counsel are concerned as much as they are when cases end in disaster. A barrister always wishes to win his cases: it is in that way that professional renown is gained. But when a case goes against him — and he usually has a shrewd notion what way a case will go before it is opened — he takes the result very philosophically. This is largely due to the fact that in civil cases, as often as not, so far as justice is concerned, it matters little what way they go. Many cases on the Common Law side are simply personal quarrels, much on the moral level of dog-fights. The landlord and tenant case I have stated is not a bad example of these. The courts here are useful chiefly as a vent for passions which, if there was no recourse to them, would find an outlet through lethal instruments in the streets. Many cases on the Chancery side are little better. They are merely struggles among packs of ravening relatives or legatees —who too often have flattered or fooled the deceased to the prejudice of juster claims—to get as much as they can of a dead man's estate. I have sometimes thought that the sooner freedom of testation, which is limited in every Continental country, is also limited in England, the better for honesty and justice. As for the law of intestate succession, which often carries a large fortune to the pockets of distant relatives of whose existence the deceased never knew, it is one of the most imbecile of institutions. Nowadays, when a man's widow and children are deprived by death duties of a large and ever larger proportion of the wealth which the husband and father toiled and strove to earn and save for them, it seems nothing short of a public scandal to allow unknown or unloved relatives of distant degree to seize riches which the intestate never intended for them, and to which they have no moral claim, and to make his king and country the last of all possible claimants to his estate. Besides, the distinctions on which some claims succeed and others fail are often "more important in principle than in substance," as the Irish Catholic counsel said of the distinction between Calvinists and Presbyterians when that distinction was kindly revealed to him by a brother barrister who was an Ulster Orangeman. "It is this way, you know, Gerald," said the Orangeman. "The Calvinists believe that all you Papishes go to h—l by predestination. You see it, Gerald?" "I understand," said the Catholic. "Now, on the other hand," the Orangeman proceeded emphatically, "we Presbyterians don't believe that at all. Do you follow me, Gerald?" "I do," answered the gratified Catholic. "No," the Orangeman went on, "we Presbyterians believe that all you Papishes go to h—l on the merits."

And thereupon the Catholic remarked that the distinction seemed to him more important in principle than in substance.

In criminal cases the issues are very different from the usual issues in civil cases. Whether a man is guilty or innocent of a crime is always a grave question which the law and the lawyers are bound to inquire into and determine with vigilance, wisdom, and mercy. And no men recognise this more thoroughly than do the barristers of England. Here they feel that they, almost as much as the judges on the Bench, are the ministers of national justice. There is no indifference among them then as to the result of their cases or as to the fate which befalls their clients. And where, in their opinion, that result is unjust and that fate undeserved, they spare no pains to undo the evil which they believe has been done. Just as in Scotland, nearly two hundred years ago, Duncan Forbes of Culloden, when President of the Court of Session, uncovered and bowed his head when he passed on Leith Links the gibbet where Captain Green had been, in his opinion, unjustly hanged; so, in England in our own day, Charles Russell of Killowen, when Lord Chief Justice, toiled unceasingly for the liberation and vindication of the unhappy Mrs Maybrick, whom he, when at the Bar, had defended, had believed innocent, and had failed to save.

(*To be continued.*)

A HOSPITAL IN FRANCE.

It was an experiment, of course. Everything the British did in those first months of war was experimental: much of it was improvisation. Our hospital was both. The story of its inception is almost as well known now as the tale of the genesis of the First Hundred Thousand, so I shall not say much about that.

The project had been simmering, I believe, in the mind of the founder from the first, and the great Women's organisation to which she belonged caught up the idea, and helped her to launch it: it was put before the public in concrete form during the last week in October 1914.

Looking back on it now, the difficulties in the way of our leader were colossal. For three months women had been chafing against the official attitude of the Government, which refused, none too sympathetically, all their offers of national service. They were ready then to replace men on the land, in the public transport and communication services, in offices, in hospitals. They volunteered *en masse* for anything the country liked to tell them to do for it, and only asked to be trained. It is a matter of history how they were rebuffed.

The founder of our hospital, nothing daunted, carried her offer of women's assistance to the French military authorities, and by them it was accepted. That was historic, too, because from that action by the French Service de Santé much has developed, culminating now in the admission of women not only to British military hospitals, but to the British military transport and commissariat services, and to certain branches of the naval and flying services.

Of the half-dozen surgeons and physicians who went out in 1914 to found our hospital, there still remain at their posts the surgeon-in-chief, decorated now by the French War Office with the cross of a Chevalier of the Legion of Honour and the Médaille des Epidémies in gold; and her second in command, who has been given the Médaille des Epidémies in silver-gilt. There is also one staff-nurse, a lady who went out then as an orderly, who remains of that pioneer band. The rest have scattered, many of them only after working at the hospital for periods of a year or longer. And there are still a few promoted orderlies, whose service goes back to the first three months of 1915. Thus, as the hospital lies in what has always technically been the zone of the "front," a goodly number of the staff wear (by courtesy) four and five of the coveted French service *brisques* on their left sleeve. Working with French soldiers one soon acquires their standard of values. A medal —well, is a medal, a recognition of merit that happens to

have been brought to the notice of the authorities who deal out such awards. But the man who can show that he has done four years *au front* by the stripes on his sleeve is a proud and honoured man: and the most glorious and honourable distinction any French soldier can wear is the *fourragère*, the shoulder-cord which shows that his *regiment* has been three or more times cited in the Orders of the Army, and that its colours have been decorated on the field of battle. The *fourragère* "for valour in the field" is for combatant corps; but any man or woman of the French Army Auxiliary services, by courtesy, can sport the more personal distinction betokening one, two, three, or more years' service at the front; and, though our hospital is inordinately proud of the cross of the Légion d'Honneur conferred on its Chief, perhaps it is still more proud of the number of its staff that can show an array of long-service *brisques* on their left sleeve.

Although women-staffed hospitals had already worked with an army in the Balkan wars, and two women-staffed hospitals had been in France before ours, the hospital was essentially an experiment, because not only were its surgeons and physicians women, but it had enlisted women to do the rough work usually done by military orderlies. It was an improvisation, because it was billeted in an uninhabited Gothic *abbaye*, innocent of everything save walls, floors, doors, and windows; and there, in a country district that had been overrun by German soldiers twelve weeks before, it was told to produce, in the briefest possible time, an up-to-date base hospital that must pass the severest Paris tests.

In three weeks the thing was done, after a fashion. There was a hospital, with wards to hold a hundred wounded on the dry upper floors of the building, and there was a beautifully-fitted little operating theatre, with tiled floor, porcelain sinks, radiators, and white enamelled shelves; an X-ray installation, a dispensary, and unlimited hot water. Followed an inspection by Paris authorities, determined to put this "women's show" to the most drastic of tests. Gothic architecture, which provided, somewhat marvellously, for a series of large rooms with sloping roofs, in between the vaulted stone roof of a lofty pillared Refectory hall and the steep outer roof of the building, gave the brass-hatted inspectors their chance. Blame the women for these rooms, and call the space-saving economies of Pierre de Montreuil "cow-sheds," and the thing was done. Brass-hatted inspectordom ordered the wards to be transferred to the ground floor. It might be damp, but at all events it had no sloping ceilings. So the "cow-sheds" (which, since the spring of 1915, named after our Founder, have had years of useful history as modern surgical wards, beloved of patients, staff, and inspectors alike) were dis-

mantled, and the great oak-floored stone halls, with their slender pillars and vaulted ceilings, their oak panels and tall church windows, where the monks of old had lived and studied and worked, were scoured and heated once more, and installed with their rows of scarlet-coverleted beds, their little white wooden bed-tables, their dressing trolleys and screens. Inspectordom was again invited, and this time was unable to withhold its grudging permission to begin work. This was in January 1915.

Luck—or the sound instinct of these eleventh-century monkish builders, whose life was so inextricably mixed up with the fresh-water system of the country—had placed the *abbaye* on the artificially deflected arm of one stream, and within the borders of another, both emptying into the Oise. This second stream became the boundary of the French military zone, and twelve kilometres within the boundary was the junction of C——, always an important railway pivot on the Nord system, destined in this war to become a key station. Here had been established one of the most important *Gares Régulatrices* of the military system for evacuating wounded from the north, through Paris, to the interior. The administrative medical officer in charge of this G.R. had borrowed from the Camp Retranché de Paris (whose zone was extended far to the north of the capital when Galliéni took charge of Paris and set to work to improvise its modern defences) all the hospitals within a twenty-kilometre radius of his headquarters, and among them our abbey. Our hospital thus became attached, through this G.R., to one of the French Armies on the Northern Front, and eventually obtained its wounded direct from the front, as they were distributed through the G.R. at the junction of C——. And C—— was destined, during the first Somme battle of 1916, to be one of the busiest and most important distributing centres for one of the greatest battles of the war, just as Senlis—historic little city!—in the second battle of the Marne resumed for itself—and for us—its importance of 1914.

So chance—or destiny—flung our little emergency unit of women into the one spot in the whole of France where it could prove of greatest value during that great struggle, and that later struggle—for Paris—in June-July 1918, and where it could also seize the opportunity to translate its experiment into successful enterprise, its improvisation into a perfected organisation, functioning at high tension during two critical periods of stress and strain.

My personal recollections of the hospital begin from the last days of February 1915. I found the unit established, and, as the French say, already thoroughly *habitué*. There were two wards on the ground floor of the *abbaye*, and one

on the second floor, in a very beautiful pillared and vaulted room that had once been the monkish library. Its tall church windows looked out to the south-west on the park. North-east, they gave on to a terrace that had been cunningly built upon the top of the cloisters, and ran round the four sides of the cloistered court, trim, patterned with grass plots and miniature paths, with a fountain in the centre. Seventy patients were in hospital, of whom perhaps one half were suffering from slight wounds. The rest were *malades*—poor fellows whom their first winter in the trenches had surprised with weak chests, internal disorders, or physical disabilities of some kind or another. Many of the patients were men of the Territorial Army and its Reserve, who, in the first overwhelming rush of the invasion, had been hustled into the front line to hold up with their outraged patriotism, their red trousers and bad boots, and their old rifles with the sword-bayonets, the flower of the German machine-made army. And, *honneur aux héros!*—they had done it!

My first experience of war at close quarters was in those above-mentioned great rooms, white-washed, with sloping eaves, famous to us ever after as the Cow-sheds. Here, on arrival, I was confronted with seventy piles of filthy, tattered clothing, most of it in sacks, ranged in some semblance of order round and across the room, each sack with a number, from one upwards, corresponding to rough pencil entries in a penny note-book, giving the owner's name and the ward he was in, and the date of his admission. Some of the patients had just been pronounced convalescent, and I was told they would shortly require their kit, disinfected, clean, repaired. In March and April we had a steady flow of wounded from the Somme, from Albert and Doullens—names that sound British to you to-day. They arrived nightly, from our G.R., at about eight o'clock. Sometimes we had as many as a score or more, sometimes as few as half a dozen. The Cow-sheds, with their stinking, crawling burden, became a nightmare. I remember our first great field-day with the soiled clothes, when we had prevailed upon a village washerwoman of pre-Marne days to get her fires and boilers going again. The pile was higher than my own head: we packed the clothes into half a dozen ticking mattress cases, hauled them down the oak stairs, and took them by motor to the village: the reek of them penetrated into the inhabited wing of the hospital and brought a horrified C.M.O. on the scene, who at once acquiesced in our scheme, cost what it might.

By May we had brought order out of chaos. A still larger room at the very summit of the big building had been reconnoitred and commandeered,—a room, I call it, but it ran the length of

an entire wing — one could have set a row of cottages, with their back-yards, inside it. We had rigged a pulley from the entrance-hall, up the well of the great oak staircase, through a hole in the ceiling that must have dated from monkish days, and secured to an oaken log in the vast attics. By this means the sacks and accoutrements were hauled up and let down —a great relief to the present chronicler, who, aforetime, had shouldered them up the innumerable flights of that fine but interminable stairway. Up here, in the then desolate topmost regions of the building, we sulphured the contents of each sack, sorted and marked the dirty linen and all kit and uniform that required repair. Army stocks were for the moment exhausted. Patients had to go out of hospital in the same kit in which they came in, whether destroyed or not, because there was literally nothing to give them to replace it.

Eventually we gave all the mending to a voluntary working party of Frenchwomen in the village, who for nearly three years undertook to mend all the kit and clothing of the men in a hospital that grew, at last, to 400 beds—though, by then, we had our supplies of military kit, and only those garments worth repairing were sent to the wash.

We were a small staff in those early days. Often one of the chauffeurs, or an orderly off duty, would wander up to our top regions to help with the mending. We fed, then, in a tiny annexe to the great monks' kitchen, so crowded up that sometimes three would share two chairs. We were still lacking many of our stores. I remember we used to eat (with a secret grimace) our meat and pudding, army fashion, off the same enamel plate. They were short-handed in the scullery, and sometimes, after a meal, there would be a call for volunteers to wash up, and a doctor, a chauffeur, and an orderly might be seen dabbling together in one greasy bowl, indulging in a friendly squabble over the only available wet cloth for drying purposes.

Very early in our history we grew beyond our original one hundred beds. But, as usual, the new equipment went astray, and there was a raid on staff beds. It used to be uncommonly cold sleeping on the floor. If beds were not forthcoming on the first hint of their need, the Médecin-Chef had a way of giving up hers to start off with. I remember passing on my bed to her the first time. Then she sent it also to the new ward. Meanwhile I had commandeered another. Of course I had to offer it again—we could not have our M.-C. sleeping on the floor. Next time I got a broken bed, which I patched up. It served the purpose fairly well; but again the M.-C. handed over her bed, and was on the floor once more. So, with a sigh, I took along my broken bed, which was retained, I believe, as being too

"groggy" for a wounded man. I had now given up a bed as a bad job, and till the missing equipment had all come I slept resignedly on the floor, or on a stretcher.

Our bedrooms were simply empty cells, with stone walls, oak floors, and lead-paned windows. If you were lucky you got a bed, a bag of ticking filled loosely with straw, and a couple of blankets, with a tin jug and basin and a pail. Other furniture you manufactured from packing-cases. Packing-cases you "acquired." We had not then a proper store-keeper, and stores were just unpacked and dumped in an empty *unlocked* room till required officially. Naturally they were usually "acquired"—unofficially—long before this. There was great competition between the wards. It was improvisation carried to excess. One wing of the *Abbaye* was an inhabited château, and there was a kind of No-Man's-Land in between our domain and that of the *châtelain.* Here had been heaped, pell-mell, all the *débris* of the Nunnery that had been expropriated fourteen years before, and much of the rubbish of the château. It was a happy hunting-ground for us, and wonderful were the articles of furniture contrived from the broken woodwork and smashed boxes and iron lumber piled there in confusion.

We had three sitting-rooms between us. The doctors' room was moderately conventional, with two arm-chairs, a couple of little round tables, and a couch, borrowed from the château. So was the Sisters' room, though here packing-cases did duty as tables. The orderlies' room was the best of the three, for it was a beautiful vaulted room built up by loving, but rather muddled, nuns on the site and to the supposed pattern of King Louis' retreat-cell and his secret staircase to the *Abbaye* church adjoining. Still, if it did not follow the precise lines of the original chamber, it was a fine room, and the whole hospital loved it, despite its appalling untidiness.

Firewood was bought by the hospital in four-foot lengths, unsplit. To save labour in sawing and splitting the logs, the fire in this room was built up with the ends of the logs in the open grate, the rest of the wood sticking out into the room, among people's legs, and getting a kick farther in as the business ends burned down. It was all very messy, very jolly, very friendly—and it was all a very long time ago, though the actual years that have passed are barely four.

During the first year's service we were practically without rules of any description. We were roughly divided into doctors, nurses, and orderlies, but the lines of demarcation were fluid and hardly existed outside working hours. The doctors made no attempt in the early days to keep up their position as officers, except in the wards and the operating theatre and so on. From the point of view of discipline it may have been a mistake, but it produced a hospital organi-

sation that is surely unique. The nursing Sisters, out of working hours, had to make their own tradition of conduct. As for the orderlies, once outside the wards and beyond the jurisdiction of their respective ward Sisters, they were under no restrictions at all. The result was that a body of tradition grew up, and woe betide the individual who transgressed this unwritten code of conduct. There were no bounds except such as the French military authorities themselves set round certain districts, such as G.H.Q., which, for the first year of our existence, were within twelve kilometres of the hospital. G.H.Q.!—magical letters which at once invested that little country town with mysterious import and romantic interest, so that it became the dream of many a nurse's and junior orderly's leisure hours to penetrate its guard! Those who had business there and were allowed to pass the cordon, found the town a very ordinary one, full of soldiers, as any other French town; but the desirability of penetration was a fetish kept up until long after the General Staff had gone and the kindly face of Papa Joffre in the recesses of a swiftly passing motor-car was no longer to be met with on the highroad to Paris.

Military discipline was entirely absent, always, at our hospital. At first its absence in our dealing with the men rather worried the military authorities. Later on they realised that here, too, our experiment had been crowned with success. We were a body of women come out to help the French wounded soldier. We restricted him only within the easy limits of ordinary hospital rules designed for his own welfare and the smooth working of the staff's duties. It was an appeal, the *poilu* conceived it, to his French chivalry. He never failed to come up to the highest demands on it. It was thus he proved his gratitude for our coming. When you consider that during the (first) Somme, and after, the wards were crowded to overflowing with Colonials, men from the Punitive Battalions (*i.e.*, old jail-birds, military prisoners, men who were being given a last chance to redeem their characters in desperate attacks on the German line), Arabs and blacks, not to mention adventurers and crusaders of the Foreign Legion, you will understand how wonderful that sense of chivalry was. Our men behaved themselves because they were Frenchmen (by birth or adoption), and we were British women. That was all there was about it. We had one punishment for offences: evacuation to a regular military hospital! Do not let me be misunderstood. I do not want to imply that French soldiers are all saints—far from it: after all, chivalry is not a Christian virtue, since it inspired a whole philosophy for the warrior gentlemen of Old Japan: it can be practised as prettily by the irreligious and the sinner as by any Christian knight of saintly character. I

have seen it, in this war, practised by women towards men. The only people who seem constitutionally unable to be chivalrous are the Boches; but they are an unhumorous, logically-minded race, incapable of reverence, whose attempts at wit are gross and indecent pleasantries.

Though perhaps the staffing of the hospital with women surgeons is the greatest innovation on the surface, the crux of the experiment was working it with women orderlies. It has been their work that has made the woman-officered hospital possible: it has been their high standard of duty and efficiency that has enabled the woman-officered hospital to forge its way ahead to the very front ranks of surgical success in the French Service de Santé. I do not mean to maintain that our orderlies were all perfect. Some of them were most imperfect! But on the whole they were a fine set: on the whole it is to them that the officers of the hospital owe their opportunities of carrying out their own high ideals. Surgeons and nurses, it must be remembered, were highly trained, specialised women; every sane critic expected them to make good; but the orderlies were untrained, raw material, most of them lacking even the personal discipline that comes from going down into the world's arena and competing there for a living. Even in the matter of physical strength they came up to a male standard for the first two years. Throughout the rush of work that came to the hospital during the Somme battle, when the convalescents who usually give a hand in hospital work had been evacuated, and the wounded poured in all day and all night long in a steady stream, every stretcher had to be carried upstairs to the wards, the X-ray rooms, and the operating theatre, by women. How arms and shoulders ached after it. The girl chauffeurs, too, handled all the cases and bales of equipment that came to our station about once a fortnight. I have known them, during the coal shortage of the winter of 1916, fill 1 cwt. sacks with coal from a wholesale yard half-way to Paris, load up the lorry with them (it had only a 15-cwt. capacity), discharge the load on the hospital coal dump, and drive back for more, till some 20 to 40 tons had been hauled in this way—just in time to prevent the ward stoves from going out.

In the end they became, not merely highly efficient orderlies, but well-trained, specialised nurses. I say specialised advisedly, for there was a great deal about ordinary routine medical nursing that they did not know.

Naturally, as the years went on, those who remained at the hospital sought and expected more responsible work, some sort of recognition and promotion. It was the recognised problem of the V.A.D. and the professional nursing Sister, aggravated by the special anomaly of the original amateur co-founders

and maintainers of a unique institution, being placed by force of circumstances in an inferior position to the professional worker imported from outside for brief periods of service. It is very much to the credit of all concerned that in spite of such difficulties and the consequent anomalies, the staff of our hospital always pulled gallantly together, so far as its professional work was concerned, and found in hundreds of ways common ground of interest where such problems were set aside and forgotten.

Some of the ward orderlies have now received a measure of promotion. Others had greater scope for individual organisation and skill, as they were placed at the head of such departments as the *Vestiaire*, the Dry Goods Store, and the Food Store. The chauffeurs, also, had their own department, under their own Chef de Service (always the senior chauffeur), with their own little room at the garage and their own separate life — a much wider one than that of any other part of the personnel, excepting the senior medical officers.

Having voluntarily relinquished charge of the *Vestiaire* to my subordinate, a much more capable successor, in favour of learning, as an orderly, more interesting work in the X-ray department, I was helped in every possible way to develop what originally was nothing more than some amateur skill in photography into a practical working knowledge of radiography, so that, for the last months of my life at the hospital, I was in charge of the department I had entered, as an orderly, more than two years before. My fellow-assistant, who rose with me, and who had been an orderly in the department when I was still in the *Vestiaire*, was the head of the department until, with the Amiens offensive and the pressure of work it brought to our hospital, her health broke down. We both had the luck, helped by photographic knowledge, to get into the only medical department in which a lay person could rise to full charge with the status of an officer.

As our hospital grew in size and numbers, it grew, too, in rigidity and convention. Where tradition had served as ample guide for the few who had watched over its birth and infancy, regulations and restrictions, rules and maxims, had to be introduced.

During the battle of the Somme the strain on us was terrific — physically, psychologically. We were stretched taut, and not a strand of the rope was frayed. We held! To drop metaphor—during the Somme battle, which, in its effects on our hospital, I have described already for readers of 'Maga,'[1] we treated very seriously wounded cases which were brought to us straight from the forward dressing

[1] "The First Week of the First Great Push"—'Blackwood's Magazine,' March 1917.

stations by train to C——, and thence to the hospital in our own ambulances. Sometimes we got the men on to the operating-table within twelve hours of being wounded. That sounds an odd boast to-day, when wounded men are often operated on a few miles behind the firing line; but under the old system of evacuating them by train to a number of distributing stations on the railway, which in turn distributed them to the various hospitals in each district, it was considered to be quick work. You must remember that the men fought on the Somme, and that we were situated only 30 kilometres north of Paris. . . . The best comment on the system is that it was radically altered after the first battle of the Somme. Ninety per cent of our cases were already gangrenous when they reached us. We had accommodation for 400, and for weeks we worked, once we were filled, with never a bed to spare. Our operating theatre was hardly left vacant long enough to be cleaned during the small hours, and it became a problem how to air the X-ray rooms during the short hours of dawn that stretched between the ending of one day's work and the beginning of another's. We were fighting gas gangrene, and time was the factor that counted most. We dared not stop work in the theatre until it became physically impossible to continue. For us who worked, and for those patient suffering men, lying all along the corridor outside the X-ray rooms and theatre, on stretchers, waiting their turn, it was a nightmare of glaring lights, of appalling stenches of ether and chloroform, and the violent sparking of tired, rapidly hardening X-ray tubes, of scores of wet negatives that were seized upon by their respective surgeons and taken into the hot theatre before they had even had time to be rinsed in the Dark Room. Beneath and beyond the anxiety of saving men's lives, there were the undercurrent anxiety of the theatre staff as to whether the boiling of instruments and gloves could be kept level with the rapidity with which the cases were carried in and put on the table, as to whether the gauze and wool and swabs would last!—and with us it was anxiety for the life of our hard-worked, overheated tubes, anxiety to get the gas gangrene plates developed first, to persuade them to dry, to keep the cases of each of the six surgeons separate, to see that they did not walk off with the wrong plates—for we had pictures that were almost identical, duplications of names, and such little complications. And it all had to be done in a tearing hurry, at the end of a day that had already lasted anything from ten to eighteen hours, and no mistakes to be made. I do not think we lost a single case from delay in locating the trouble and operating in all that first terrible week of July. The losses were

due to delay in reaching the hospitals.

Our experience, as that of other hospitals, must have been a deciding factor in the decision of the French authorities entirely to reorganise the system of dealing with the wounded. Hence in 1917, during the brief April offensive, and in the autumn of the same year during the successful attack on the Chemin des Dames, the French wounded were not evacuated directly by train to permanent base hospitals outside the danger zone. They were dealt with in enormous temporary camp hospitals installed as near the firing line as practicable, cutting out, wherever possible, any train journey at all. Here their wounds were cleaned up and drained freely by spartan surgical operations, and all foreign bodies removed which could be found without prolonged exploration and precise localisation. The happy result was that very few of the wounds became gangrenous, and hundreds of men kept limbs and life where under the old system which hustled them off to the rear, *out of harm's way, to the greater comfort of the base hospitals*, they would have lost both. Within a few days, all cases but those to which a journey might involve danger to head, chest, or abdominal wounds, were sent on to other more comfortably installed hospitals farther back, where the incisions made were sewn up, and any remaining foreign bodies localised and taken out. Such a system, apart from the geographical changes in the front, was bound to affect the work of our hospital. Instead of receiving the critical cases for operation on arrival by our own surgeons, we became, along with the other base hospitals, a sort of depôt for the surgical cases that merely required skilled dressing or small secondary operations, and good care until they were sufficiently recovered to travel long distances to convalescent hospitals in the interior—or, in the case of slight wounds, to go on leave preparatory to returning to the front. (Certain cases were permitted to pass their period of convalescence at their own homes—a privilege diligently sought after by all the suitable cases.) Also, as we had won a high name for surgery, we received large convoys of sick and unfit men whose condition necessitated surgical intervention of a more conventional order. Useful work, but routine work, and therefore a little monotonous,—work which required doing, but which might be done—within limits—at any time, in any hospital.

It was during the summer of 1917 that we branched out into a second hospital. April had witnessed tragedy in the Champagne: tragedy in which wounded men as well as the troops bore their share. I suppose it was vowed by men in authority that when the carefully prepared autumn attack on the Chemin des Dames should take place, there would be such a prodigal supply of

accommodation for the wounded that even in the unlikely contingency of a reverse and a successful German counter-attack, there should be adequate provision. Hence our offer to provide a hospital on that front was received with gratitude, and an old evacuation centre on a branch railway—a camp of hutments almost on the direct line to Soissons and Vauxaillon—was furbished up and placed at our disposal. There our new hospital sprang up, mushroom-like. Nothing could have been more different than this ultra-modern *baraque* hospital from our own ancient *Abbaye*. Rows of wooden huts, with oiled-paper windows and composition roofs, on either side a new road sweeping through the camp to the railway line at the back, each with its sharply-cut trench, its duck-board walk and bridge. It made no mark for the eye at even a very little distance, the plough-land coming up to it in waves, the forest screening it. In a few years, one felt, no trace of it would be there—the corn and the trees would have grown over its very site.

As a hospital it was equipped with our best, staffed with our finest, and the long breathing-space between its inception in July and the actual attack in October 1917 gave ample opportunity to perfect the most insignificant detail. Yet, when the attack developed, it was only as a Reserve Hospital that our people waited, breathless. It could only have been under a reverse that the new hospital would have been called upon to play a part like that the *Abbaye* had played during the Somme. Yet they waited, tense, expectant—and we, at the old hospital, at the other end of a wire, waited too, half jealous of the possibilities of work before this new upstart child of ours, half afraid that after all it would not get its chance to prove its parentage! Happily the attack was successful beyond all expectation. The hospitals in reserve, ours among them, had not been needed. The reason for its waiting, empty, having ceased to exist, it was made use of, desultorily, as a hospital for light cases, and later for *malades* and ordinary operation cases.

If life in the early days of the *Abbaye* had been free and unrestrained, here in camp it became entirely untrammelled. Right through to the winter, when the thermometer in the staff huts stood twenty-two degrees below zero, our women led the roughest of open-air existence. Nothing resembled life at the *Abbaye* except the same old spirit of chivalry in the men, and for the same reason—they were Frenchmen, our folk were women, and allies. Here, even more than at the *Abbaye*, the men were free, and unrestricted by rules and discipline. Yet here also they behaved always like the gentlemen they were—and the kind of gentleman a French *poilu* can be is a very fine gentleman indeed: a primitive gentleman, if you will, lacking certain shy and self-conscious reticences inseparable from the

Englishman's notion of gentlehood, but in essence and intention a gentleman of the finest water. In the Somme we had come to know the Colonials, the Moroccan Divisions, "Marchand's Lambs," some very fine regiments of the Nord—all picked units that lead every great advance. At the new hospital we came to know two others among those picked troops, the Zouaves and the Chasseurs. Suicide troops you can call them if you will, but their valour is not the foolhardiness of those who know no fear: it is the tempered, cool courage of intelligent men. These attacking Divisions have the best brains of the Army, the most high-strung nerve, the most sensitive imagination —France's best, that leads, and deliberately sacrifices itself for the glory of maintaining that tradition of leadership.

At our new *barraque* hospital we had certain innovations, departing utterly from our old principle of the woman-staffed hospital, for the military authorities allocated to us a score of military orderlies—unfit and convalescent men, still technically patients at the neighbouring huge hospital for *malades*, in connection with which our own was originally established. They were not of very much use as trained hospital orderlies, though as hewers of wood and drawers of water, easy-going substitutes for our own junior orderlies in the more unskilled and menial tasks, they were of considerable assistance in a scattered camp.

When my (self-set) three years' term of service was almost finished, I had the opportunity of working for a few weeks as *locum* at this new hospital. This was in the winter of 1917. I saw for myself what a creditable offspring of our old hospital this new one was. We had one busy week while I was there, when a train of wounded was unloaded at our siding, and about a hundred of our beds were filled. During the remainder of the time we were not particularly busy, and I had opportunity for long walks in the forest of Villers Cotterets, visits to Corcy, Longpont, and the war-scarred little hamlet that sits on the crest of a hill, on the doorstep as it were, of Cœuvres. I drove, too, with our milk-collecting car through the forest to La Ferté Millon, across the plain of the Ourcq to Chézy. It was ground of extraordinary interest. It all spoke of the great battle of the Marne that in 1914 saved Paris and the Allied cause. Just as when, in June, I had gone with an emergency canteen party from our *Abbaye* to Soissons, and had been taken over the reconquered country from the Pont des Anglais to the cross-roads leading to Laffaux Mill, and back across the Aisne through Venizel, I had thrilled to its *past history*, its past connection with France's martyrdom and the "Contemptible Little Army"; so now it was of the glorious victory of 1914 that I thought as I looked across that huge campaigning ground that is

cut across by the Ourcq and bounded by the Aisne and the Marne: it was the agony of 1914 that was brought home to me in the forest, with its shell-torn trees, its little scattered graves of Scottish Highlanders and English Guardsmen. Nothing was further from our thoughts, in 1917, than a second agony of anxiety for Paris in the forest of Villers Cotterets, a second great victory of the Marne. As little did we, at the *Abbaye*, dream that Noyon, the town from which, during 1917, our light cases were evacuated to us, would once more become German, and that quiet little Compiégne, where the washing was sent and our chauffeurs got their driving-passes, in four months' time would be evacuated by all but the vanguard of an army barring the road along the Oise valley to Paris.

I had been in London four months when the blow fell, and the enemy tried so hard to drive his wedge between the British and French forces down our own valley of the Oise to the heart of France. It seemed dreadful to be at home then. I knew what must be happening at the hospital. It was the rush of work of which I was thinking. What I had not pictured was the pitiable stream of refugees, moving Paris-wards; the silent packing up of our own village neighbours; the stragglers from the battered British Fifth Army. What I had never even imagined was the anxiety at Soissons—at Villers Cotterets even, down whose forest roads our other hospital had the pain of watching British troops marching in retreat. . . .

The people at the *Abbaye* never faced the possibility of evacuation, and the fact that no steps whatever were taken to prepare for such an eventuality had its steadying effect on the scattered population of the countryside. Still they prepared for flight; they had had the Germans there before. At the other hospital, however, the possibility of the wedge being successfully driven was contemplated, and the consequent withdrawal from the Aisne that such a disaster would have involved. Each member of the staff had a packed knapsack, and knew that a German success at Compiégne, say, would mean swift evacuation for the hospital on the edge of the other great forest watch-tower of Paris. Some of the tired British troops rested at the hospital as they passed, marvelling that British women still were there. They left behind them a memento—a little old fox-terrier dog with an unashamedly vulgar tail that curled over his back. The battery passed on; the little dog was missed, but could not be found. Hours later he was discovered, draggled, caked with mud, curled up on the bed of the young Vaguemestre, who promptly adopted him as the hospital mascot.

It was not till April that they sent for me at the *Abbaye*. The strain of that month's work in the Oise valley, coming on top of an illness barely

recovered from, had broken my old X-ray colleague's health, and they wanted me temporarily to take her place in charge of my old department. I crossed by the short Channel route and made the long railway detour necessitated by the bombardment of Amiens, round by Le Treport and Beauvais. That journey revealed to me the new martyrdom of France and reinitiated me into the old unconquerable spirit of the French people, for our train was besieged by hundreds of refugees from the British front. In my carriage they were mostly from Merville, just evacuated under a bombardment that had destroyed their homes. They had nothing left to them but what they wore on their backs. But they had an indomitable courage, a fine faith in our soldiers. "We shall be back in a month or two: the *sale Boche* will find it is his turn to be driven back before so very long!" they said with quiet confidence. And to-day Merville is liberated.

When I arrived at the old hospital it was strangely different, yet the same in essentials. The War had come close to us again. Troops and guns streamed along the roads. Newly-cut trenches disfigured the fields. A great bomb-hole, full of water like a pond, gaped not fifty yards from the Concierge's lodge. The Noyon-Montdidier front had stabilised, and the rush of work from the offensive of March 21 was just over. We had steady routine work for about three weeks, then a week in mid-May of comparative idleness. Our more tired workers were being sent to Villers Cotterets for a rest, and some of the fresh workers from there, who had had an idle spring, came down to the *Abbaye* to relieve them. And then one morning —it was the 27th May—our Médecin-Chef came back from local (medical) headquarters with a sheaf of sudden orders. She had always maintained an isolated view that the next chapter in the story of the campaign would open on the Aisne: it was a kind of presentiment, an *idée fixe*, and she had taken it into deliberate account in making plans for the two hospitals. A list of staff to be transferred to the Villers Cotterets hospital was in existence; those members of the personnel whose names were on it had been warned long since to be in readiness to move at two hours' notice. So that afternoon two car-loads of rather bewildered, somewhat sceptical staff accompanied her to our hut hospital on the borders of the great forest. We at the *Abbaye* heard little of them for two days. But the news of the German surprise offensive on the Aisne filled us with anxiety. We heard late on the 28th that our people were acting as a Casualty Clearing Station, that the theatre staff we had sent up had not been to bed, but was operating ceaselessly night and day. Next we heard, with profound relief, that the hospital was to be evacuated to Meaux. We also received an order from our chief that we

were to empty our *Abbaye* and have as many beds ready for eventualities as possible. Then silence. On the 30th the news in the communiqué was so bad that we felt justified in fearing that Villers Cotterets was already in German hands. We had spent the night of the 29th and the early morning of the 30th in evacuating the wounded from our hospital; I think we had reduced our number to sixteen! Then came a telephone message from our Médecin-Chef, laconic, unembroidered: "Send up all the cars you possibly can immediately to evacuate the hospital." So they were still there! and the enemy, for all we knew, on the point of entering the town. How our remaining chauffeurs worked! for the two who had taken up staff had not come back. Afterwards we learned that they had been commandeered by the authorities to help evacuate Soissons.

Everything on wheels at the garage was made to go somehow, and volunteer drivers for the extra ambulances found among the orderlies. One of the temporarily broken-down cars had to have a driver and a mate to pump petrol all the way. Another was taken off the jacks by our mechanic (a wounded soldier awaiting his discharge), patched up, and put on the road within a couple of hours. I do not know how much they all exceeded the speed limit that evening on the stretches of road that were clear. There were miles when they had to creep in and out of more slowly moving convoys. As they neared Villers Cotterets they met unceasing traffic—the mixed sad traffic of a forced retreat. The Germans were already shelling the town, and were reported to be at Longpont, seven kilometres distant by forest path from the hospital camp.

Meanwhile the order to evacuate to Meaux had been rescinded, and a counter-order received that the hospital was to unpack its outfit and be ready to receive a hundred seriously wounded cases at once. So the equipment, packed in haste, was unpacked again in record time, the beds set up, the theatre re-furnished and stocked, and the X-ray plant re-wired and re-erected. (It was not Field equipment either, but the best base hospital outfit.) After that there had been no pause in the work till 1 P.M. on the 30th—the day of the message to us—and Villers Cotterets had been bombarded from the air by night and by day. During the night of the 29th (while we at the *Abbaye* had been getting through our emergency evacuation to the accompaniment of our nightly air raid) the immediate neighbourhood of the camp had been attacked with such fury that the hospital—in pitch darkness except for the theatre, where they made shift to work by the light of a couple of carefully shaded candles—escaped as by a miracle. The theatre, into which the wounded men were carried just as they had fallen, was described to me afterwards

by the orderly, who acted as second Sister, as a hell and as a shambles. Nine thigh amputations running; men literally shot to pieces; the crashing of bombs and thunder of ever-approaching guns; the explosion of a train of munitions on the line; next, the destruction of a level-crossing keeper's cottage within a stone's-throw of their own siding; the operating hut, with its plank floor and the tables and the instruments on them literally dancing to the explosions; the flickering candles; the anxiety lest the operated cases might hæmorrhage and die in the dark; the knowledge that the next bomb might get them; the still more awful fear that the French might have miscalculated — that the door might be thrown open and a German officer walk in on them. . . . (It had happened to a French hospital nearer the Aisne.)

They had worked on up till the last moment, hardly heeding, after the terror of the exploding bombs, the long whine, sharpening to a scream, at regular intervals overhead that told of enemy shells. Then the military authorities gave the order that not a single further case must be operated on—that the hospital must be evacuated at once. The relief of the poor fellows lying helpless in the wards was pitiful. For some of them the long road journey by ambulance to safety from the enemy might mean death, but they were all glad to go. No Allied soldier can contemplate without horror such a fate as falling, helpless, into the hands of the Boche.

Meanwhile, the two cars that had gone up with the staff, and had been with them since the evacuation of Soissons, had filled up with some of the younger girls, and come through to us at the *Abbaye*, bringing us the first detailed news we had.

It was an American ambulance section that had taken our wounded away, with one of the Sisters on each car to keep an eye on the operation cases. Next, the Médecin-Chef had despatched two parties of the juniors, in charge of two of the younger doctors, on foot, with instructions to make their way as best they could, *viâ* Crépy-en-Valois and Senlis, to the *Abbaye*. Some of them, we learned later, got lifts in military *camions;* some of them were able to board a train of empty trucks at Vaumoise, and thence to travel by stages to Chantilly. You can picture them, each with her knapsack and an odd bundle or two, sitting in a tightly packed row on the floor of a dirty truck, their legs dangling over the edge, their heads nodding as they dozed, even under such conditions, so tired were they. Most of them were eventually picked up by our ambulances at Crépy or Senlis. Some were so tired after the unceasing strain and the long march, that they stopped the night at villages *en route*— only to be disturbed most vilely by Flying Fritz, who was exceedingly prodigal of

his bombs just then. Two Sisters, with a *sangfroid* which I envied them, spent the night *at a railway junction* in a railway carriage that had been damaged by a bomb on the preceding night—and slept! A small party remained with the Médecin-Chef at the camp, hours after the last wounded man had been taken to safety, collecting and roughly packing the more valuable equipment—such as drugs, dressings, and electrical apparatus—in case the military authorities should later be able to transport it to the rear. Everything, including the trunks of the personnel, was stacked up on the hospital railway siding under shelter. When our cars got through to them, German aeroplanes were renewing the attack on the town, and the shelling was becoming unhealthy. A bag or suit-case apiece for each member of the staff, the theatre instruments, and some X-ray tubes were packed into the lorry with about eight of the party, the rest coming on in two ambulances.

The first of our cars to get back to us from Villers Cotterets—one of those that had been there since the 27th—brought us disquieting news of the fast approach and near neighbourhood of the Germans. When a bomb fell, as it seemed to our strained ears, in a field just behind us, and a big machine just skimmed the ruined tower above our heads, we plunged into the old monkish cellars beneath the *Abbaye* and waited tensely. . . . But no bomb fell on the building, or near it. Instead, we heard the welcome hum of our own lorry's engine, which came creeping, all lights out, into the garage yard. A very tightly packed and shaken party—including the fox-terrier—tumbled out. They had run right through the centre of the air attack as it had concentrated on a certain town on their road, chased, as it had seemed to their excited ears, by a low-flying bomber.

All our cars were in by 5 A.M., and all had had adventures. And all the chauffeurs, within the next two weeks, made still closer acquaintance with Flying Fritz, for from that morning we collected our wounded from Senlis, and the roads were attacked nightly. Most of them made tip-and-run dashes into Villers Cotterets to salve the X-ray apparatus, dressings, and drugs, and the trunks of the personnel, until they were forbidden to take such risks for any but wounded men. Night after night they faced the raiders, for from about the middle of May until July the enemy came over practically every night, and if he did not always visit our immediate neighbourhood, our drivers usually had to meet him somewhere on their long run to Senlis, and they had some narrow shaves. It is bad luck on the wounded, for, from the moment they are hit till they get well into the interior if they are French, and into the

country if they are British, the Boche is after them,—in their ambulances on the roads in France, in the base hospitals, in the trains—and if they are British, in the hospital ships coming over to England. Air raids are trying to any creature, but to a helpless wounded man, with nerves perhaps still on edge from the racket and tumult of the battle, they can be hell. The marvel is that so many scarcely heed them. Many of our men sleep through the noisiest and nearest of raids. I do not know when our drivers slept, for they were on the road night and day, what with bringing men in and taking them out, and doing extra runs to other hospitals from the distant H.O.E.

On the 31st May began for us at the *Abbaye* the period of the greatest stress and strain our staff has ever known. During the first battle of the Somme we had had the consciousness of meeting a crisis fresh, with something in hand. There was never any danger of our organisation being strained to snapping point. This time we were tried up to and beyond our strength. And we started tired. The Villers Cotterets hospital was officially evacuated on to us, and carried on in amalgamation with us. Somehow or other we managed to provide 480 beds. . . . They even stood in a serried rank all round the four sides of the *Abbaye* cloisters. In this great surprise drive the Germans had swept away all the hospitals between Soissons and Villers Cotterets. Normally, the wounded from the forest would have been evacuated rearwards, towards Meaux. But there were German troops at Longpont, and Germans were shelling La Ferté Millon. And the French were not facing the Aisne, with their backs to Meaux. They were standing across the Villers Cotterets Forest, obliquely facing the Ourcq, with their backs to Senlis and the Oise Valley, their left swinging up to Cœuvres and the Compiégne Forest, their right pushed down on to the Ourcq. So the wounded from that magnificent army that held the second Forest Gate to Paris were taken by road to Senlis, where an H.O.E. or Hôpital d'Evacuation had been hastily set up in tents, and thence distributed to the scattered hospitals of the district around, again by motor ambulance. Our own old Distributing Station had removed from its former quarters at C—— to a neighbourhood less frequented by Flying Fritz than an important railway junction, and to a line whence, under conditions subsequent to the German advance towards the Amiens-Paris communications, we at the *Abbaye* should only receive through it evacuations from the Beauvais district. We were thus a godsend to the sorely-pressed H.O.E. at Senlis, and they flooded us with badly wounded cases. In obedience to our Médecin-Chef's inspired telephone message received on the 29th, we had emptied our hospital of the March-April cases, all but about a dozen.

In three days we were full to overflowing. In fifteen days we had brought in, X-rayed, and operated on, one thousand wounded men. On several days our six drivers brought in one hundred cases from Senlis (a fifteen kilometre run) and evacuated another hundred to our new H.O.E. for the northern front, eight kilometres distant in the opposite direction. I do not remember how many men were brought in during the twenty-four hours of that first day—31st May—but I know that I, personally, made eighty-five X-ray examinations, and that neither my assistant nor the developer in the Dark Room got to bed until the dawn. I went on until the assistant from the Villers Cotterets hospital relieved me at 9 A.M., and did not go on duty again until noon. We worked at this pressure in the X-ray Department until the 4th June, when the Villers Cotterets radiographer rigged up the salved outfit and started in to help us. The heaviest week for the Villers *équipe* was the one that followed, from 9th June till 15th, in which period they made 164 examinations. And in all the history of the camp hospital—that is, from August 1917 till the day they evacuated it—they had made less than a thousand X-ray examinations. Our own Abbaye *équipe*, from the 31st May until 13th July (the period of the Aisne fighting) made 1100 X-ray examinations, against some 9000 of its entire three and a half years' career, the total figures for both *équipes* bringing that total up to 1680 examinations for the six weeks. (In normal times the proportion of screen examinations to plates was about one to four, but when working at such high pressure many of the cases were only screened and the position of the foreign body marked in two positions at right angles to each other, and the proportion then worked out at about 40 per cent.) If we were overwhelmed with work in the X-ray Department, the Operating Theatre staff was even harder pressed. Two extra emergency theatres were opened. With three theatres working all day and two of them all night, it can be imagined how the surgeons were pressed, and how near the anæsthetists came to being anæsthetised themselves. I do not think the Médecin-Chef or the "Second-in-Command" ever got more than three hours rest in the twenty-four during that first strenuous fortnight. The X-ray and theatre staffs, after the first two or three days, when they fared equally badly in the matter of sleep, roughly organised themselves into shifts working eighteen hours and resting six. Thus we were able to cope with it, but at the cost of such a severe physical and mental strain on those who were already tired with two or three years' work at the hospital, that some of them were worked out by August who might otherwise have carried on until the end of the war. However, they coped with it, and that was the main thing. To take up

my old metaphor of the rope —this time it frayed — some strands even broke. Yet in effect it held. We only lost forty out of the thousand gravely wounded men brought to us in that first fifteen days. Some of those losses, even in that nightmare of suffering and unceasing work, seemed doubly sad—to touch us personally. Perhaps it was because we had been brought so near to the battle. Some of us had been in the forest. All of us were behind it—in the valley of the Oise—in the path of the enemy progress to Paris, *if that forest gateway did not hold.* And the men who were so gallantly, and with such a full appreciation of the situation, holding it, were brought to us when they fell, by road, within a few hours of the attack or counter-attack in which they had been wounded. We did not have to wait for our papers for news of the fluctuations of that death struggle. It came to us hourly, on the lips of men mortally hurt, yet full of the sense of their personal responsibility, of a fine determination that the enemy *should not pass.* It was the spirit of Verdun over again.

In the early part of the struggle, when the fate of Villers Cotterets was in the balance, there came to us a gallant old colonel of *huzzards,* with his commandant, and two or three of his junior officers. He had heard about our hospital. He had faith in the methods by which we combated that dreaded enemy—gas gangrene; he had asked that he should be sent to us with his officers. Already we had some of his troopers. He was brought to my table to be examined, and he was wounded in several places, with a badly smashed elbow and upper arm. He was courteous and brave, and seeing that he was a heavy man and the stretcher-bearers too busy to stay and help move the patients, he tried hard to accommodate his poor suffering body to the number of positions necessary for localising the different pieces of shell, speaking all the while politely in his laboured English. The regiment had been rushed up as reinforcements, as usually happens in an emergency with France's splendid cavalry (which for four weary years has taken its turn in the trenches with the infantry), and then dismounted. In an open corn-field it had faced and held the enemy while other troops were thus being enabled to retire to stronger positions. They had been well-nigh cut to pieces. He did not attempt to disguise the gravity of the situation: he had never imagined that there could be so many Germans, he said wearily, smiling. Yes, they were still falling back, but slowly. Yet, somehow, those grave tidings, coming from the commander of such a regiment, with such a story, filled me with confidence, not dismay. With such troops to bar their way, the Germans might advance still farther—*but they would not pass!* And his arm? He was interested, not anxious. The smash was

not too grave in itself: he would very likely keep his arm; but there was always the danger of infection. . . . Yes, he understood that. But he had heard that here, at our hospital, we acted quickly, drastically. Here, even if there were infection, with such prompt radical treatment, one had the best chance. . . . There seemed, indeed, full ground for hope. Yet some days later, after drastic treatment—his arm had been amputated, large incisions made, serum given—the old colonel was buried at our little village churchyard. I was examining one of his troopers at the hour the colonel died. The man was a Corsican, with a bullet in his body that had traversed vital abdominal organs, and he was in great pain. He asked after his colonel—a good man, he told me. Not only a just man whom his men would follow anywhere because he was just, and though kind, a strict disciplinarian, but a man with the fine brain of the accomplished soldier. Such a one—he must not die: it would be a loss to the French Army: there were others who were good officers, and as just as he; but there were not many with his gifts, his intellect, his skill in warfare. If he died, it would be a loss to the campaign—was already a serious loss in that he was severely wounded and thus out of it. I did think, did I not, that we could save him. I dared not tell him, as he himself was about to undergo a critical operation, that his colonel had just died. The trooper himself followed the colonel not many days later.

How one learned to hate and dread the deadly gas infection. Usually it proclaimed itself unmistakably enough to one of the senses. Sometimes it was latent and localised; sometimes latent, and then, suddenly, would light up and destroy its victim almost before its presence could be discovered and the unfortunate man rushed, out of his turn, to the operating-table. That was always the problem—to take the most urgent cases first, for by the time one convoy had been examined and graded for priority of operation, another had come in, and the order had to be upset, for here were new cases worse than the "next on the list" of the preceding lot; and by the time these had been done, and the original list resumed, some poor fellow far down on it had run up a temperature, and the deadly infection had lighted up in some unsuspected way, and there followed an amputation; while others, now equally bad, waited. It so often happened that two men, let us say, graded A and G when examined at a certain hour, in two hours would have changed places, A's condition remaining stationary, while G's became progressively worse. Since the early days of the War the X-ray plate has had its share in detecting the lurking enemy. As a rule, with gas infection, the radiographic plate merely confirms the ex-

amining surgeon's diagnosis. Occasionally, in rush work such as ours was, when the cursory examination of the wounded man on his admission gives no hint of gas infection, the plate reveals the fact that the anærobe is at work in the soft tissues lying deeper than the wound; or that gas, perhaps at some distance from the entrance wound, is beginning to track along the muscle sheaths. It is when the radiographer gets such an indication—say, in the case of a wounded knee, with gas tracking up the thigh—that the plate is of supreme value; for in such a case it is on the radiologist's report, and not on the grading of the examining surgeon, that the man is sent straight into the operating theatre, that the knife and the Pasteur serum may between them arrest the mischief before it has gone too far. An indication to be of any real value is bound to be very slight, for if there is much radiographic evidence of gas, the infection is far advanced, and the loss of the limb almost certain. Further, when the infection is thus far advanced, it is not only clinically evident without any confirmation being necessary from bacteriologist or radiographer, but it has other patent means of proclaiming itself to any person not destitute of his olfactory responses. The aim of the radiographer then, in assisting to detect latent infection by anærobes which may at any moment light up, and if unchecked run through all the stages until the flesh becomes gangrenous, is to produce negatives in every instance of such fine quality that the slightest indication of the presence of gas in the soft tissues may be clearly visible; and secondly, in order that his reading of the plate may not be confused by the shadows of gauze or wool, or uniform fabric in the wound itself, or even by medicaments in the dressings that photograph in identically the same manner as gas, to radiograph wounds wherever possible without a scrap of dressing on them. As wounded men are often placed on the X-ray table with tourniquets on, and the first dressings supplied at the *Poste de Secours*, it can be understood that this second is very often impossible—indeed, most bad fractures have to be radiographed through the emergency splints!—and that therefore the radiographer must be familiar with all the appearances that may photograph like gas, and especially with the characteristic bubbles or striation that correspond, roughly, with certain combinations of bacteria. One may often be deceived into reporting gas when there is no gas: with good negatives it should be impossible ever to miss a gas indication if it is there. Consequently the radiologist may justly claim that the X-ray is doing its part in combating the progress of gas infection in all hospitals where it is routine to examine newly wounded men before they pass on to the operating theatre.

There was another officer that came to my table. He seemed very uneasy about himself without appearing to be very ill. He was wounded, practically, all over—told me he had at least forty pieces of shrapnel in him, and I concluded he was peppered and nervous. As it was a case of going right over him from head to feet, I began to examine him at his shoulder and chest, which were peppered, and worked downwards towards his legs. He spoke to me with deep anxiety about the chances of gas infection, and I began to compare his demeanour unfavourably in my mind with that of the average *poilu*. Then I worked down to the near thigh and knee. He was full of shrapnel—large pieces; and even through the fluoroscopic screen I could see the tell-tale gas indications. Hastily I began marking the position of the larger pieces on his skin. Suddenly he became faint and ill. Through the screen I glanced down his leg—more shrapnel; at his other leg, thigh, arm—more shrapnel; at his bandaged head (he had been able to move his head about freely)—still more shrapnel peppered thickly over his scalp. It would have taken me an hour at least to mark them all, even had it been possible to remove them all at one operation: I do not think he had exaggerated when he spoke of forty pieces. I reported him to the theatre next door, and was instructed to go on further with the localising of the pieces, but to send him in directly the case in at the time was carried out. While we waited for the stretcher-bearers (we had had to send for military ones, as with such hundreds of cases coming and going daily the carrying would have been quite beyond the strength of the girls in the wards, even could they have spared the time), the *lieutenant* rallied and began to tell me about himself. He was a man of over forty—had been a Colonial *Préfet*, and had volunteered for service as *simple soldat* when the war broke out. Recently he had been granted a commission, and had married a young wife. Again his anxiety betrayed itself, and this time I could not assure him that he had nothing to fear from the deadly infection. As he was carried away to the theatre, he thanked us for our attention to him, and murmured something about his anxiety being all on account of the young wife—so lately married. He lost his leg, poor fellow, but that did not save his life. He had little chance, with such a mine of metal in him and a virulent infection to fight; and for a Frenchman he was by no means young. They pinned the Cross of a Chevalier of the Legion of Honour on him just before he died, and his young wife, who had been summoned, desired that it should be buried with him. . . .

It seemed to me that half those gallant *poilus* deserved the Croix de Guerre, the

Médaille Militaire, and the cross of the Legion. And a very large number of our men had won medals.

In those days of stress the wounded were picked up and sent indiscriminately to our hospital. We had several German soldiers, and a German lieutenant. On the whole the German private soldiers were plucky enough, though one, of an incredibly low type of countenance, shocked us with his lack of pluck, his animal intolerance of pain, and his animal desire to bite the thing that came nearest. But the officer behaved like a coward. One hesitates to describe any badly wounded man thus. Still, judged not only by the standard of French courage—admittedly a high one—but by that of his own German "cannon fodder," the man was cowardly. His shrieks and yells of fear, his complete lack of control when in pain, were an outrage to the humanity of all those wounded Frenchmen, and the wounded men of his own race. He complained of his treatment, and was abusive to his nurse. Being very ill, an officer, and a German who played the coward to boot, with whom one could not ask French officers to share a ward, he had to have a room to himself (vacated for him, as it happened, by the very nurse whom he designated by that choice Teutonic epithet of "Schwein"), which necessitated special treatment and considerable extra work. One is proud that the French practice is to make no sort of difference between the wounded, whether Frenchmen or enemies; but when such an one as the *Herr Lieutenant D*—— claims more attention than even our own officers obtained, one wonders bitterly what sort of treatment is being meted out to our men in German hands—the hands of men who can turn machine-guns from aeroplanes on fleeing refugees, drop bombs on hospitals, and deliberately torpedo a hospital ship full of helpless wounded men. All that *Herr Lieutenant D*—— legitimately had to complain of was that his own side's aeroplanes, bombing the neighbouring village, disturbed his rest at night.

Do people at home realise, I wonder, what aerial warfare in France has become? Almost nightly at that period the German machines dashed across the lines and methodically bombed towns and villages—and indeed fields and woods occasionally! They interfered considerably with our work, for we dared not show a light when they were about: they had bombed a hospital within twenty kilometres of us one night when they were working late and the lights showed from the hut windows, and had killed a number of wounded and their military male nurses. It was impossible adequately to darken our vast ecclesiastical windows, hence we had to put out all lights in the corridors, halls, and stairways. Imagine an inky dark corridor full of stretchers of newly wounded—more stretchers being carried

up pitch-dark stairways from unloading ambulances: more stretchers being carried out of theatres with unconscious men on them—the groping in the dark, with the noise of the guns all round, and then the shattering crash and dull quaking of a bomb! And in one of the huge wards—a vast building in which one could place a parish church, with as many lofty windows—and in the half-open cloisters, nurses groping about in the dark, and men beginning to hæmorrhage. Yet a bare light would have invited a bomb, the German aviator being what he is. I have seen one of their *leucht-bombs* suspended in air, lighting up the surrounding country in its evil reddish glow, while the bombs were dropped on a village near us; and later, the poor village victims have been brought in, frightfully injured, those who had not been killed outright. French houses have good cellars, but these villagers had been taken unawares in their beds. The tired working woman does not hear the slow measured throb of the Boche engine approaching—a sound most sinister, that is warranted to wake most of us who have been in hospitals within the raided back areas. An occasional visit by day, with the leisured firing of a gun or two, and the little white puffs of shrapnel smoke in a blue sky, is an interesting incident. The intruder is probably seeking to take photographs; but the bombing by night, night after night, when from a crowded hospital full of helpless men one hears that sinister sound beating nearer and nearer, with the sure knowledge that death and destruction are in store for some hapless mortal somewhere, is horrible. The gross barking of the vulgar Bertha, as you hear the boom of discharge away over the lines, and a second or two later the crash of the explosion out Paris way, is nothing to it: one knows that very few of Bertha's shells do any harm. The air squadrons are a real danger and a very present terror.

A young American sergeant in the French Flying Service, a pilot of a very famous squadron reminiscent of Franco-American friendship in days gone by, was brought to us wounded. He had attacked four German machines, and had been brought down between the lines. One of his opponents swooped low and put a machine-gun bullet into his leg as he lay there among the wreckage of his aeroplane. A Frenchman brought him in and carried him to a *Poste de Secours*, and he was put in an ambulance and sent to us. For a long time he seemed to be doing well once the badly-smashed leg had been amputated, but other internal damage caused by the fall declared itself, and he died in the middle of a startlingly sudden and furious aerial storm that died down as unexpectedly as it arose. His death brought home to us the new and indissoluble bond of fellowship between the three principal Allies fighting on the Western

Front, the devotion of other pilots and French flying men of his Service, some or other of whom came every day to see him; our own sudden shocked sense of loss as though a Britisher had died.

During the early days of July the work had slackened slightly, though the hospital was still uncomfortably full, and the daily operation list often carried us into the night. On July 14 we waited with bated breath—surely the German mind could not resist renewing the offensive on France's great festival of freedom. And nothing happened — nothing but a constant stream of monster guns and companies of little tanks tooling merrily along the roads towards the Forest of Villers Cotterets. Their meaning we only learned on the 18th! At 5 A.M. on the 15th we heard the voice of gross Bertha recommencing as we had heard it on May 27. "The Offensive has begun," we said, and hoped that we were wrong, for we were all tired out. It had begun, and we were a little perturbed at the news. And then, three days later, our ambulances were telephoned for, and a stream of almost deliriously exultant wounded came in proclaiming the fact that we had attacked, successfully, at Villers Cotterets. Still we only thought it was a counter-attack, a distraction on the enemy flank. But the wounded streamed in, numbers of splendid young Americans among them, and always with news of further progress. Our tired-out staff was hardly able to brace itself for this new call on its energies, but the glad news of a real big blow, Foch's counter-offensive at last, so heartened us that it put new life into us. And simultaneously came the news that at the request of the Grand Quartier General itself our hospital had been taken over by the Army Administration from the French Red Cross Society, which during the past three and a half years had merely *lent* us to the army which happened to occupy our sector of the Front and its corresponding back area. This was a compliment. But to be nursing General Mangin's magnificent troops was a privilege.

This time I felt I could watch the hospital effort at a distance (comparatively speaking), for the long exposures to the X-ray which I had been unable to avoid during the May-June offensive had resulted in my having to give up work in the examining room and come right out of the rays. Others had taken my place, having providentially appeared at the right moment, as so often happens in critical situations; and in the comparative peace of the Dark Room, developing the plates for my erstwhile assistant, I could think it all over. The thought that amused me most was my own settled conviction of a few months back that the great work of our hospital had culminated in the first battle of the Somme, and that after the merely useful routine work of 1917 we should never again be called upon to

do such critical and strenuous work as that which we had accomplished during the second six months of 1916. And here we were, breaking all records, and being told to enlarge to six hundred beds. Such is the fortune of war! It was the fortune of war that had placed us there, in the Valley of the Oise, between the two great battlefields of the war, where in turn we had played an important part as an emergency hospital in the first Somme battle and the second battle of the Marne—for in history the German forward movement of May 27 over the Aisne, and the French counter-offensive which drove them back from Château-Thierry and emptied the famous "pocket," will live as one great battle.

During the first week of this fresh fighting, our two X-ray *équipes* made 279 examinations. The theatres were once more working night and day. Worn-out personnel, gone home on leave at the close of June, were beginning to trickle back, refreshed, to relieve the more tired ones. My own three months' temporary re-enlistment was more than over, and I was of no more use as an examining radiologist; there were now sufficient people, too, to undertake the developing and the "reading" and registrar work in connection with the finished plates. So I left France on the day when the high-water mark on the Vesle had been reached and the last bulge in the "pocket" finally pinched out. The second great and critical battle of the Marne was over, and the most brilliant soldier the war has produced was already planning his next great stroke on the Somme. Thousands upon thousands of Americans were arriving; their first self-contained Army was on the point of completion; on every Front their divisions and brigades and regiments had already proved their quality in action; their guns and their aeroplanes had already made an impression on the enemy; their Army Medical Service was in full swing; their transport and re-victualling services showing the hall-mark of American business organisation. One felt that the most critical moment in the history of the war—for the Allies—had passed: we had topped the rise, henceforth we should be going down the hill. It was a good moment at which to have one's work suspended.

My last memory of the hospital is a typical one—an all-night sitting in the theatre, at which I assisted in the humble capacity of an extra orderly to help clean up. The last patient was carried away at four, and we ourselves closed the door at 5 A.M.

SKIA.

THE TEST.

I.

BEYOND the fact that they both belonged to the sea, the *Nan-Ling* and her captain had next to nothing in common. They sailed in company, were tremendously dependent each on the other, and yet there was no contact; taking externals at their face value, they were as unlike as the grub and the butterfly, or any other brace of opposites that fancy may suggest. In this, of course, they offended all the canons of the confraternity of quidnuncs who have made a study of the men who go down to the sea in ships. "As the husband is the wife is," they quote at you, only they substitute "captain" for "husband," and "ship" for "wife," and insist that herein lies one of the iron rules. Baldly stated, the *Nan-Ling* was a marine trollop, and, according to the law of environment, as well as a great mass of precedents, Dixon Gray should have been a down-at-heel shell-back, all his brass-binding tarnished or lost, his garments frowsy, and his habits as indifferent as his dress; but only a glance was required to show that in none of these conditions did theory square with fact. Whatever grace the ship may have flaunted in the days of her youth, by the time that Gray took her in hand she had fallen away to the level of a time-worn, battered old tramp, sailing under the Chinese flag, and owned by a set of men solely intent on squeezing every possible penny out of her as long as cheap patching would keep her afloat. And to this end everything about her equipment was utilitarian; not an ounce of superfluous ornament did she carry. All her paint had a protective object and nothing more, one coat was expected to last the life of two, and her store-room was one of the barest afloat.

From truck to keelson the *Nan-Ling* was dealt with on the same parsimonious plan, all skimping and scraping. Even the dock-wallopers of a dozen ports reproached her with nicknames of their own coining; she was a blot on the sea, to her captain an out-and-out obscenity — a thing of shame and offence. But she served his purpose, and therefore he pretended to laugh at her degradation. At all events, she had at least one redemptive quality. On the outer front of her chart-house she carried a brass plate which gave all the credit for her building to a certain firm on the Clyde, and probably by that fact alone is this chronicle made possible. But for the sterling workmanship which framed her shell and fashioned her engines, she must assur-

edly have gone to the bottom of the China Sea when Dixon Gray applied his terrific test.

Still, she was everything that I have said—a disreputable drab, while her captain was one of the marine aristocrats, young, clean, and well-groomed, scrupulously exact in his dress without being a dandy, and in respect to his manners, written down by some of the landsfolk as "a perfect gentleman." Even when he surrendered his command of the *Argonaut* he carried that part of his character with him. He was also accompanied by the haunting secret which drove him to that momentous change.

As captain of the *Argonaut* there was no mistaking his pride of position, though all the time there was that other side; and in all the strange tangle perhaps the most perplexing circumstance is the fact that no one ever suspected him. But then the man himself was such an unusual blend. "Mind, I'm not a weak man, Mac," he said to Alec Macdonald one day after the chief engineer had penetrated his secret, and, in so doing, established a new link in their friendship. "I won't have that. I'm not what you might call a weak man with a redeeming grain of strength. It's just the reverse with me. In many respects I'm strong—a strong man with a constitutional flaw." And he was right, the signs of strength being so flagrant, so positive, that the baser metal was concealed; they made his shield and buckler, covered him as a garment, and so he was held up as the perfect type, everything that a sailor ought to be. As he walked through the streets of great ports women paid him homage, silent but undisguised; and men, watching him on the bridge of his ship, erect, alert, confident, also rendered him the tribute of envy or admiration, according as they themselves were framed. It was only a handful of his fellow-seafarers, men who forgathered with him in the captain's parlour at Dougal's famous chandlery hard by the Mersey docks, who were conscious of contradictory circumstance; for here his personality was limned against a merciless background, here he had to stand the test of contrast with that gallant company of deep-sea warriors, among whom Dougal's store in Silver Alley ranked next to their own homes, the place where they made their real landfall and departure, and in the intervals of shore freedom exchanged their teeming gossip of the great waters. He was one of them, it is true, but—different. That was the mark of the man—difference. They exhaled the positive tang of the sea in every movement, in themselves, in their tongue—while Dixon Gray with his subdued speech, his reflective manner, his shrinking exclusiveness, suggested rather the library, the study, or the desk. And yet not a man among them ever

doubted his seamanship, his possession of all those abounding qualities that make up a lord of the merchant service, nor did they suspect the skeleton in the cupboard.

Strictly speaking, there were two Dixon Grays—the man as he was known at Dougal's and the man Macdonald discovered on that fog-swamped night at sea when his soul was laid bare. So complete indeed was his disguise that his very weakness was hailed as a sign of strength. At sea they christened him "Captain Dead Slow" because of his passion for caution, and his reputation spreading to the land, he received that supreme commendation, "a safe man with a ship."

He had his narrow escapes, of course; that was inevitable. There was, for example, that day when Andrew Dougal found him alone in the captain's parlour staring in gloomy abstraction at the wall, his fingers beating a tattoo on his chair arm.

"Something wrong, captain?" he was asked, and although he denied the suggestion, his negative was lacking in conviction.

"At least, nothing that matters," he hastily added. "Got my orders, that's all."

"And you don't like them?"

"I don't. North Atlantic. Cargo of heavy goods for Montreal. After that, trust to luck."

Dougal raised his eyebrows. "North Atlantic," he said. "Bit of a change for you, isn't it? Your beat's mostly been East Indies and Pacific, eh?"

Ignoring the question, the captain of the *Argonaut* broke into hot invective against the realm into which he was now to venture. "North Atlantic," he fumed. "At this season too. One of the hells of the sea. Fog and ice, and again fog. Leagues of it. Got to sneak through blindfold for hours at a stretch — days. Syren screaming like a lost soul all the time. No comfort, and eternal risk." He repeated the words "eternal risk," and then, twisting about, found Dougal's questioning eyes riveted on his face, whereupon he turned his outburst into a run of forced laughter. "Bit of a pampered kid, eh, Dougal?" he said. "You see what comes of too much sunny sky and warm sea. Spoils a man for the higher latitudes."

He left it at that, and three weeks later the *Argonaut* steamed down Liverpool Bay on the top of the morning tide, the eastern sky a web of hammered gold edged with crinkled waves of pink and pearl, and rippling lines of delicate green. But far away by the desolate seas of the Grand Banks the fog already lay in wait, massed battalions of it drawn across the track, a dense sight-destroying pack, a thing to sap the vitality of giants. With such a man as Dixon Gray upon the bridge, however, there was no room for doubt about the handling of the menace. As the vanguard swirled clammily about the ship, turning a world of sunshine into a realm of impenetrable gloom, the finger

of the engine-room dial swung round to half-speed, barely was the sun thrust back into oblivion than the finger marked dead slow, and with the passing of the light the ship lifted up her clamorous voice. "Br-a-y—Br-a-y—Br-a-y," she wailed,—shrank into sullen silence, and then "Br-a-ay" again. That was the beginning of it, the first atom of ninety-six exaggerated hours, four solid days of sightless groping. For most of the men, of course, there was nothing new in it, nothing daunting; this was merely one of the casual adventures, unpleasant and dangerous, but not more so than many of the possibilities they had shipped for, and not one suspected that the captain in any wise differed from themselves. But when they were nearing the end of the third day Macdonald put on his thinking-cap.

II.

About Captain Gray's seamanship criticism had no chance of a hostile word. It was in strict conformity with the loftiest professional code. From the first moment of their blind pilgrimage, that appalling crawl through the core of a tractless world, he remained upon the bridge, hour after hour, day after day, never leaving it except to pass by a few paces into his chart-room for a cup of steaming coffee and a snack. Not even to sit down on the edge of the settee: merely to gulp his hot drink and then bolt out again into that hateful vacuity. As a rule he had the place to himself; but somewhere about the seventy-fifth hour, when he loomed through the doorway again, haggard and pinched, his eyes red-rimmed by fog and lack of sleep, he almost stumbled over the Chief, who for a brief spell had left his engines to the Second, and was here stretched out in a chair, puffing placidly at his pipe. Not a word passed between them, not a nod—nothing but a glance—until Gray again lurched back towards the door, when Macdonald rose and placed a hand on his shoulder.

"Laddie," he said, "this'll no' do. You'll have to ca' canny or you'll break. Just drop yersel' doon on that chair and shut your eyes for a wee spell—five minutes—ten. Haven't you got Peers on the bridge. And isn't he a guid man,—almost as reeliable as yersel'. Noo, then—five minutes."

But Gray wrenched himself free. In a shrill staccato he rasped out something about five minutes being a long time—a tremendous time; long enough for a ship to go down in; time enough to turn him into a dead man. That was how he put it. Himself. Not a word about anybody else. There might

not have been another man in the world. His vision travelled away to the sombrous patch framed by the gap of the open door, and rested there—that gap which seemed to lead to nowhere; and then out of the waste there fluttered a tremulous blare on the port bow; a second, thinned by distance, on the starboard beam; for a third, the wheezy stuttering of a hand-worked horn on a windjammer's poop.

"D'ye hear them, Mac?" he demanded. "All round. And not one to be seen. They'll do me yet. Bound to—some time. Death—disaster! Mebbe it's here now—close aboard—out there in the fog. Nobody knows." His feet scraped wearily along the deck, the gap darkened and cleared, and the chief was alone, staring out through the opening, his pipe in his fingers, his brows wrinkled in a frown. "'Sakes," he muttered, "but it looks bad! Dinna like it—not a bit. I've seen the signs before, and—I'm hoping I'm wrong."

Bracing himself aslant in the doorway, his figure vaguely silhouetted in a dull splash of yellowish lamplight, he watched for a while the working of the drama, if in a region where sight was paralysed men could be said to watch at all. With all the great arcana of the sea concealed the sense of motion was almost lost, for the ship was making little more than steerage-way; and but for the heave of crank and thrust of rod, the muffled rumble of the propeller-shaft, the reluctant beat of the revolving blades, he might have fancied her swinging to an anchor in some safely sheltered haven. That was part of it, but only part. The illusion was destroyed by sound, a riot of discord: overhead the syren dolorously wailed; somewhere out there, close at hand, a seething swirl and clang proclaimed the passing of another ship; and at last the deep-toned bellow of an ocean packet, far away but swiftly advancing, drew Macdonald to the rail, where he craned far over, peering anxiously into the sodden cloud. "The doddering fool!" he muttered. "Smashing away at the full—through this murk. An' we're going dead slow." The *Argonaut's* measured call swelled to a frantic scream, and so the two ships blustered at each other—the one defiant, hectoring, clamouring for a clear course; the other pleading, begging for a few spare feet of open track. Whether the appeal was being regarded, it was impossible to tell: all that was certain was that two blind ships were rushing towards each other through visionless space; that Alec Macdonald watched and waited; that Dixon Gray, from the corner of the bridge, silent, motionless, shrouded in a dun pall, watched and waited too. If his shout counted for anything, it was Mac who saw the thing first—a blur of light, a veiled menacing eye that balefully glared at them out of the void. Almost in

the same instant he saw Gray hurl himself at the telegraph-lever, heard his cry to the helmsman—"Starboard, man! starboard! Hard over!"—felt the sheer and bound of the ship as the engines crashed into speed; and then his ears were filled with a tumult of sound, and a luminous flood enveloped him as the hurrying mail-boat swept by. "A close call that!" Macdonald grimly muttered—"fearful close! A wee bit closer wud have put ma pipe oot," and, so far as he was concerned, that was all; but his comrades, being cast in a different mould, shook their impotent fists at the phantom as she trailed away through the fog, and in half a dozen tongues were still cursing her when she vanished from their ken. But this was not the end. A handful of the crew still lingered in the waist, denouncing the folly of captains who drove their ships full speed through such a "mush" as this, when, just athwart their course, the darkness ominously deepened, thickened to a monstrous blot which seemed for the space of seconds to hang there, a ragged mass without outline, and then became a pyramid of bellying sails and creaking cordage, and a hull so close that any of them could have tossed a biscuit aboard.

"Think I'll bear a hand below," Macdonald gasped, as the windjammer drifted away. "There's ower muckle diversion up here for a quiet body. I can see noo that there's something t' be said for the ostrich buryin' its head instead o' luikin' facts in the face." And so he proceeded to "bury his head" amid the flashing turmoil of his engines. It happened, however, that he was again in the chart-room in the hour of their release when the *Argonaut* crawled out into a new world wherein sight was restored, a world with the shine of stars above and the spacious freedom of the seas ahead, astern, and all around. Nor was the fact of his presence there an accident; it was part of a shrewd and kindly plan, that of a man intent on standing-by with his help if help should be required. As for Gray's confession, there was nothing voluntary about it; he never intended to speak—we have his word for that—but he was overwrought, his will weakened by his tremendous vigil, by want of food and sleep, by that appalling strain, and no doubt Macdonald's sympathy completed his conquest. Most likely the spectacle of the burly chief kneeling by his feet, unlacing his boots, applied the finishing stroke. At any rate, whatever the prompting, the captain suddenly laid a hand on the other man's shoulder and blundered into self-revelation.

"I—I'm done, Mac," he wearily declared. "Going to end it this time. Been thinking it out, and I won't carry on any more. Can't. Couldn't stand another turn. I'm no sailor-man. Never meant for the sea. And—I—I'll go ashore and stay there."

"You'll go intil yer bunk,

ma laddie," the chief retorted; "though I'm fearing you'll ha' to go in yer boots, forby ye'll let me cut them off—yer feet's that swelled. And it's a peety, for they're a graund pair. But boots or no boots, ye're going t' have the bonniest sleep ye've had sin' yer mither rocked ye in yer cradle. And I don't blame ye wanting t' stay ashore. A ship like the *Argonaut's* a fearful responsibeelity for one man, but you conned her through it fine, and we're all that much the mair in your debt."

"The ship! As if I cared about the ship," the captain petulantly snapped. "I—I—never thought about her. And I didn't think about you. Nor the men. Nor anything. I—thought only of myself. Not another soul. That's how it always is. I—I—was afraid—I——"

"And I'm afraid that if you don't get them forty winks you'll be haverin' a lot mair rubbish," Macdonald broke in. "But here's steward with a cup of coffee, and we'll have nae mair talk."

III.

"Tell the mate to call me in an hour." That was Dixon Gray's last command, drowsily delivered as he clambered into his berth; but a kindly conspiracy made the order a thing of no account, and the clock was allowed to work half a round before he again mounted to the bridge, the deep-graved lines of weariness washed out, externally himself again. To the crew he was just as usual, the Old Man they had always known, calm and self-confident; but Macdonald detected a new atmosphere, an element of greater reserve, a strain about his manner and his speech. And, applying a certain interpretation to the signs, the chief kept to his own quarters as much as circumstance would permit. "I'll give him time an' it'll blow over," he decided. But in this he was foiled, for when night again settled on the sea the steward called him to action. "If you're at liberty, Mr Macdonald, the captain 'd like you to step along to the cabin." A refusal rose swiftly to his lips, and as swiftly he saw the futility of resistance and so capitulated.

That the meeting was far removed from the ordinary was clearly shown by the captain's reception of him. He fussed about as though his chief engineer were a rare visitor whose call insisted on ceremony. A chair had to be picked for him, a comfortable one; and then there was the tobacco jar and the matches, a cigar if his preference ran that way, the whisky and the soda syphon, all of which Macdonald suffered in silence, for the reason that observation and deduction had told him more already than the other man bargained for. But once the ice was broken all the captain's hesita-

tion vanished. He was rather afraid that he had been giving himself away in the fog and after it, that was how he began, but so far as talk went he was still in a bit of a fog, had wakened with quite a hazy impression of what he had said. How could a man's brain carry anything after such a crucifixion? And so he would be very much obliged if Mac would tell him exactly what it was that passed between them, all of it, plainly and honestly, as between friends. On that word "friend" he laid great stress. It offered the keynote to his move. Only with a well-tried friend could he have acted thus. He was desperately in earnest too, and refused to be put off when Macdonald would have lightly dismissed the matter as "just the sort o' stuff t' be expected fra a man who'd been full three days on a mushy bridge." His hands gripping his chair arms, Gray thrust himself forward, his face hardening, and demanded the truth, every word. He was up against facts and fate now, he explained, and he meant to go through with it, whatever the cost to himself might be.

Grumbling that he had a better use for his time than to spend it in storing up all the silly talk that was teemed into his ears, Macdonald made a show of surrender and offered a preposterously free rendering of the Captain's enigmatical outburst; but half-way through Gray pulled him up. "That'll do, Mac," he said, a flicker of a smile breaking up the hard lines. "I'm not calling you a liar; I'll just say that in this case you're a poor hand at telling the truth. So you can stow the rest. I fancy I can make a pretty good shot at it. No, don't bother; I want to do the talking now. And by way of a start, I'm going to tell you about something that happened to me when I was a kid."

It concerned a servant maid, this adventure in the days of his youth, the girl being one whom the gods had endowed with imagination and the gift of tongues. As a teller of tales she might possibly have had her equal, but surely there were none to excel. She was just the one to captivate a child's fancy, and so, at every opportunity, he would steal away to the kitchen o' nights and, books and games forgotten, he would sit there spellbound while Susanna led him through the glory-tinted realm of Romance. If only she had been content with the fairies and the elves! But one never-to-be-forgotten night she turned to ghosts, and out of her flimsy shades she conjured an unspeakable horror. Talk about making your flesh creep! She did more. She froze the marrow in his bones, chilled his heart, turned his blood to water. Not that he was conscious of any terror—he felt nothing but the thrill and the terrible fascination so long as he had Susanna for company, and revelled in her awful host. But when the hour of bedtime came, and bidding good-night to his father and mother, he faced the darkness and the

loneliness of the world beyond the stairs, he found himself beset. The moment he rounded the bend in the landing, and the black corridor gloomed ahead, the spectres swept out from all their horrid lairs. Not singly but in battalions. A legion of them. Grisly skeletons. Shadowy, filmy, immaterial wraiths. Things with flaming eyes. Things with claws. A hideous horde of monstrosities. Imagination filled his bedroom with them. They surged along behind, floated all around. He was hemmed in. He dared not go forward, they barred his way of escape. And so he cowered down on the stairs, squeezed himself up into a corner with his back to the wall, so that he might at any rate have an outlook on his right hand and his left; and there he sat for an hour, two hours, sat until his father discovered him, a pitiful scrap of terror, sick and perishing with cold, shivering through dread of something that was not there. And that might stand for a faithful picture of his life. Thus had he gone through all its stages —shadowed by fear, overwhelmed by it. His years had been peopled by ghosts. He had come to recognise himself as Mr Much Afraid. Of course he knew that fear and heroism were not necessarily conflicting terms; perhaps the most valiant souls were those of timid men who refused to surrender to themselves. But he wasn't one of that sort. He was all for himself. Never was his terror generous enough to include another being. The rest were outsiders. And that was how it was with him in the fog. He didn't care a straw about the ship, and as for the men aboard he never gave them a thought. Up there on the bridge, through all those hours of agony, his seamanship, his skill and experience, his endurance, were focussed on one skimpy atom of fact — himself, his own safety.

On this note he halted, the half-way line. He had not yet finished, the avowal must be crowned by the decision, but his case was too grave for him to run the risk of being misunderstood. "You see it, don't you, Mac?" he demanded. "The sort of man I am? Where I stand?" But the chief refused to commit himself.

"Oh, go on," he growled. "Let's have the rest. I'm mair concerned at present with what I canna see. For one thing, I canna understand how a lad built on such feckless lines should have come to follow the sea."

"You may take that as another example of weakness," Gray bitterly replied. "It was part of the blunder. I hadn't seen the ghosts then. I can snap my fingers at any danger when it's out of sight, be the bravest of the brave before the battle. Besides, I was only a lad when I made my choice, a lad bewitched. I saw the world through tinted glasses. Like so many others, I was steeped in Robinson Crusoe, and all that gallant

crowd. Life was romance with a capital R. All glamour and glory. Sailoring meant cruising in sunny seas most of the time, seeing strange lands and wonderful people, and being a very fine fellow. If I'd only known! What a life it's been. What a life! And when my eyes were opened I hadn't the moral courage to own up and back out. Fear again. This time I was afraid of the whispering tongue and the pointing finger. Afraid of what folks might say. Afraid of being found out, stripped of my shoddy disguise. That was at the end of the first voyage. When I came home again the chance had gone, my father was dead, and there was very little money for my mother, let alone any to waste on starting me afresh. So I—I—just stuck it. Chose a dog's life. Worse!"

His confession, it will readily be seen, left a good many gaps, and Macdonald pounced upon them, one after another. But Gray had no mercy on himself, and countered him at every turn, insisting that the portrait was faithful—none of its tones too high. Why, even that great master-stroke, his transfer from sail to steam, was inspired by a spirit of cowardly subservience to the First Law. He knew how people had praised him for his acumen, his foresight, making him out to be one of the seers whose vision had predicated the decline of the wind-jammer and the triumph of the steam-driven craft; but it wasn't that at all. He took to steam simply because he perceived that the steamer in its development was going to be the safer craft. Thinking of his own skin again. Ambition indeed! Self-preservation was his only law.

Afterwards, when time for reflection was given him, time for analytical dissection, Macdonald was astonished beyond measure by the paradox with which he was confronted. Above everything else did it seem to him that Gray's physical cowardice was much less remarkable than the moral courage of his self-exposure. Even granting the truth of his indictment, the man, without knowing it, was superb. It was hardly conceivable that it was himself he was attacking; that it was he, Dixon Gray, who was the prisoner at the bar, himself at once the accuser and the judge. He was so resolute also in his verdict. Without mercy. Fatalistic too. He had made up his mind that one of these days he would go too far. Nothing could shake that conviction. There would be disaster. Even if he kept his life his name would go. He would betray his real self; be held up to the derision of the world as one of those who put life before character, before everything. "Do you know, Mac," he said, lowering his voice impressively, "that when that packet hurled herself out of the fog I could have screamed? Like one of those Dagoes who are always the first to start a panic. And I

shall do it one of these days. You'll see. It's one of the awful things that paralyses me—that unborn scream with which I shall proclaim myself for what I am."

And so he had resolved on action while there was still time. Self-respect had vanished long ago, but he would go on posing; if he couldn't have the substance he would have the shadow. And when this voyage came to an end he was going to leave the sea. Didn't know what he would do. He would have to turn to something for a living. That was imperative. Perhaps he would buy a farm. Though even on the land he supposed he would find more ghosts to scare. Still, he must take the risk. Anything was better than the life he was leading. To leave the sea he was determined, and no amount of talk would turn him from that purpose.

"Unless ye find a cure for your complaint in the meantime," the chief dryly suggested, giving his words such a twist that Gray was compelled to ask what he was driving at.

"Naething that I'm going t' tell," Macdonald stubbornly responded. "I've been mightily interested in what you've told me, an' ye have ma sympathy, but at present I havena got a satisfying grip o' your case, and I'd rather reserve ma judgment than pronounce a verdict I'd have t' reverse. I'm no' keen on second thochts. When I tackle a job I like t' finish it. At present, so far as I can see, your case is no' so hopeless as ye seem t' fancy, an' wi' a bit o' luck you'll find a cure. Only, I'm no' prescribing. There's some cures that can only be found by looking for, an' some you'll never find wi' seeking. They come unbidden, in their own time an' way. Ye'll have t' bide." And beyond that cryptic saying he refused to go. Only, as he was leaving the cabin, he turned about and, with a sagacious nod of the head, reminded the young captain that much might happen between the beginning and the end of a voyage. "You can never tell," he added. "I've seen mair than one life twisted upside down in a quarter of an hour." Over his shoulder he fired a final warning. "The sea has a powerful grip, laddie. I'm no' sure about her letting you go."

IV.

Of the power of its grip, the sea, in its own inexorable fashion, proceeded to give convincing proof. His cargo discharged at Montreal, Captain Gray was ordered to take his ship in ballast to New York, where a freight for the Bermudas awaited him. Thence he went back to the Hudson, and now, instead of loading for one of the home ports, he was sent off on the long trail to the Pacific. But in spite of the

delay, through all the dragging hours he kept faith with himself. So far from weakening under the sapping attack of Time, as Macdonald secretly hoped, his resolution steadily hardened—was firmer at the end than the beginning. The cruise became stamped as The Voyage of the Last Things. When the *Argonaut* steamed out of Valparaiso harbour he rejoiced that at length he had struck the homeward track; at the end of that tremendous beat round the Horn, as the black headland dropped astern, repellent as ever, a grim symbol of challenge to all seafarers, he confided to the chief his sense of gratitude that Cape Stiff had no more bad dreams to give him; when they rounded the North-West Lightship into the Mersey he breathed deeply and murmured his thanksgiving: "The river. The finish. A sailor no more. Done with the sea for ever—and the terror—and the risk." And so when the ship was comfortably tucked away in dock and the crew had been paid off, he professed to be greatly amused by the thought that if ever he trusted himself to the sea again it would be as a passenger.

"Ye mean t' bide by your fool's notion, then," Macdonald demanded, almost fiercely, whereupon Gray took an envelope from his locker and held it up. "There's nothing on earth will stop me," he insisted. "There it is, signed and sealed. My resignation. I'm going to the owners now. In an hour I'll be adrift."

"Then," Macdonald declared, "I'm taking back what I said aboot finding a cure for—your complaint. There won't be any cure when you've handed in your ticket. You'll be a hopeless case."

For the first time in their comradeship they ceased to be friendly. All the softer lines in Macdonald's face grew hard, his eyes flashed a message of censure, his tight-set lips held back a flood of stinging words. Half a dozen of those words released would probably have hurled them apart, kept them apart for ever, but in time Macdonald recognised the explosive peril of speech and not one of them escaped. "I'll bide till ye're ready, and we'll go ashore in company," he said, and nothing more. Together then, a little later, they passed down the gangway, in silence they threaded the twisting path of the wharves, and when they reached the gates they faced about and Macdonald held out his hand. "Here's good-bye and good luck," he said; "and if ever you're in need of a friend either wi' advice or the helping hand, you'll no' need t' think twice aboot where t' look for him."

"In spite of the fact that I'm a——"

"Because of the fact," Macdonald gravely corrected, "that I've found you a likeable lad, even though ye have got one varra foolish weakness which ye might outgrow if ye'd give yersel' a chance. Till we docked the boat I'd hopes, but I maun confess that your bit paper has

knocked them all into Kingdom Come."

Thus, on the flags in front of the grimy Customs House they parted, Macdonald bearing away for the station with his sister's home in Aberdeenshire as his ultimate goal, and Dixon Gray for the office in Water Street, where an hour's wordy contest left the head of the firm bewildered and disappointed, and Gray a free man. He had yet to learn, however, that freedom was not power. Indeed, by degrees he painfully discovered that Life had a large stock of surprises in store, and one of these it presented ten months later when it set the feet of the captain and the engineer upon converging tracks, and once more threw them up against each other at Liverpool hard by the gates of Wapping Dock. Looking neither to the right hand nor the left, his thoughts apparently in the clouds, Gray would have passed through without seeing his old comrade, but the heavy clap of a hand on the shoulder brought him sharply round, and there was Alec Macdonald again, his face aglow, the shine in his eyes proclaiming his joy. And Gray also declared himself glad, delighted beyond measure, though even a child would have detected the fact that his assurances were tainted by an element of restraint which suggested that the meeting was not altogether to his liking. But Macdonald's friendship was too real to be lightly spurned, too rich also for such a mood to live for longer than a hasty moment, and in a trice they were shaking hands for the second time over the chance that had cast them together again.

"You'll observe that I've resumed the livery, Mac," said the captain, calling attention to his sea togs, and in response to the chief's question he nodded his head.

Yes, that was it—he had returned to the sea. Not because he had found its call too powerful for resistance, but because the land had rejected his overtures. It would not have him. He had been defeated—badly. He had learned that it was one thing to plan a new start in life and quite another thing to carry the purpose into effect. Though he ought to have known. There was nothing he was cut out for now except looking after a ship. The sea had made him one of its slaves. He had knocked at all sorts of doors and found every one locked. Nobody wanted him. How could they?—an untrained man. Why should they want him—with labour so plentiful and berths so few? He had left no stone unturned, no door untried—all manner of trades and professions—but he could not point to a single job that he was fit to take up or able to wait until he could make it keep him. And so he had come back to the sea and the life from which he had fled.

"And the firm's given ye another ship." Macdonald took that for granted. "Of course, they'd be mighty glad. They always set a lot of store by you. But, man, why didn't

they let you have the old *Argonaut*. Yon's an awfu' skipper that's sailing her now."

"The firm!" Gray laughed bitterly. "They had found they could do without me. They saw no reason to doubt that I was still a very fine fish, but they had discovered others in the sea equally good."

"D'ye mean t' tell me that they turned you doon?" Macdonald flared.

"I mean to tell you that they regretted there were no vacancies, but they would put my name on their waiting list. Only, the awkward part is that your name on a list won't give you a square meal, nor find you in togs and shoe leather, nor make a bed for you to sleep in; and so, after waiting longer than I had any fancy for, I've taken the only thing that offered. A wretched old tub. She's been lying over at Birkenhead for months—condemned—crow's foot painted on her hull by the Board of Trade. And, seeing that she's not equal to the lowest British standard, she's found salvation under a foreign flag. Used to be known as the *Sea Pearl*, and now she's the *Nan-Ling*. I'm fitting her out for the China Sea. What d'ye say to having a look at the brute. I've five minutes' business here, and then I'm going across the river."

Here, then, is the record of Gray's return to the sea, or, at any rate, the skeleton of the story. The bones he clothed with flesh on the passage out, for it happened that a week after their meeting Macdonald entered the cabin of the "brute," and, placing his bag on the table, proceeded with mock solemnity to introduce himself.

"I've come aboard, sir. Ma name's Alexander Macdonald, an' I'm fra Aberdeenshire. There's ma ticket if ye want t' see it, an' I'm th' new engineer."

A moment of bewildered silence, and then Gray broke into a storm of protest. "You mustn't think of it, Mac. You mustn't do it. Giving up the *Argonaut* for this lump of bagwash. And all for——"

By way of indicating that he had come aboard to stay, Macdonald calmly hung up his hat and coat. "Dinna fash yersel'," he said. "I've seen waur boats than this. And I wanted a change. Yon skipper of the *Argonaut*—he's an awfu' man." An hour later, down in the gloomy depths of the engine-room, grimly surveying the machinery which now lay in his keeping, he repeated the first clause of his verdict. "Ay, ay, I've seen waur ships, though I dinna call to mind where; an' I've forgot their names. But she's a maist interesting craft, and I can see some graund possibeelities in the trip. There's even a chance of the skipper finding a cure for his old complaint."

V.

Having made one profession of faith in the potentialities of the great god Chance aboard the *Argonaut* as she worried over the waste of the Grand Banks, and a second in the engine-room of the *Nan-Ling* at Birkenhead, Macdonald, so far as I am aware, paid no further court to the deity until Dixon Gray and he had thrashed about the Orient for a trifle over a year. And then one night on Dane's Island, half-way between the store and the jetty, he called upon the stars to bear witness that "the skipper had got his chance at last." After which he prayed that "the laddie might be kept fra playing the fool," and so passed on to the boat and was rowed out to the ship. He was clearly well pleased, if not with himself, at any rate with Circumstance, and all because in their Odyssey they had been led to that fragment of volcanic rock and sand and matted jungle which is known to the sailors of the Eastern seas as Dane's Island—a name which, by the way, bears no relationship to the one that marks it on the map. As for its place, it lies within a circle whose line might touch Luzon at the top and the Banda Straits at the bottom, with Saigon and Gilolo on opposite sides; and it is indebted for its fame, as well as its name, to the settlement upon it of Stephen Dane, the trader who managed in the course of years to win for his store a measure of renown as high as that of Andrew Dougal in Silver Alley at Liverpool.

This brings me then to that sinister day when the *Nan-Ling*, her hatches battened down, a fair head of steam showing in her gauges, lay to an anchor in the harbour at Swatow awaiting the order of release. But her captain showed no fancy for the open sea, and while his crew of nondescripts hid themselves away from the throttling heat, he spent quite half his time in front of the barometer in his cabin. And he was frowning at the portentous proclamation on the dial when Macdonald descended upon him.

"I'm thinking," the chief engineer said, "that if we're no' likely to get under way I'll clean masel' up and have a spell ashore. There's a man I'd like t' see."

"I'm staying where I am," Gray sullenly snapped. "Look at the glass. Did you ever see such a drop? And still falling. Three-sixteenths in an hour. Who'd leave a safe harbour in face of that—especially in these waters. Just fancy pitching yourself into a cyclonic storm in Formosa Straits. Sheer madness. Besides," as though he were defending himself against attack, "I'm not the only one. There are half a dozen skippers who won't face what's coming any more than me."

"Oh, that's all right," Mac-

donald airily replied. "I'm not setting masel' up in the seat o' judgment. You're the skipper, and you ought t' know. And it's no business o' mine. Though I might mak' free t' mention that opinion seems t' be divided, if it's true what some o' the boys are saying aboot a junk going down the river this morning—not twelve hours sin'. Withoot the wind, too. Had her sweeps oot. Not that it signifies that much, for mebbe she'd only be going round the corner."

"Junks!" Gray's lip curled scornfully. "What have I got to do with such craft? If some ridiculous Chink thinks fit to commit suicide it's no concern of mine. I have to make my own laws. Though I suppose that whatever I do will be wrong. That's the way of the sea—its gross unfairness. I'm wasting time by sheltering in port, and if I take the ship out and lose her I'll stand a jolly good chance of having my ticket cancelled—providing I don't get lost myself into the bargain."

"Ah weel," drawled Macdonald as he turned away, "it's your toss. And, of course, if it's the ship you're thinking aboot——" He checked his speech as he saw the blood rush swiftly into Gray's face, but whether the thrust were intended or not, the words had sped upon their shattering course, and he made no attempt to divert them. As for his stay ashore it only lasted an hour, and he explained his speedy return as dictated by expediency rather than by choice. "There's no telling when the blaw 'll begin," he said, "and I thought I'd better get aboard while I could."

Grumbling about the sweltering discomfort of everything, he stretched himself out on the settee and lay for a quarter of an hour with his eyes closed, while Gray lounged back in his chair, his body limp and resistless, overwhelmed by the atmospheric oppression, the furnace-heat, the breathlessness, his brain dominated by an odd medley of thoughts. At that moment, indeed, thought was the only force with any virility; for the rest, life seemed to have become suspended, it was just as though in all the world there was nothing but a tremendous silence. And so he abandoned himself willingly to a spell of brooding inertia, and when at last the calm was disturbed by a dull booming, something familiar and close at hand, he did nothing more than glance indifferently at Macdonald and wonder why he should have thought it worth while to worry himself with talk. About that junk, too,—that preposterous Chinese junk. As if the thing could have the slightest interest for anybody aboard the *Nan-Ling*. It was so utterly unlike old Mac to give way to these fancies, but no doubt this maddening heat had upset him, knocked him off his balance. The first fact picked out by Gray's drowsy listening was that Macdonald suspected something fishy about the junk. Not that he knew

anything for certain—nothing beyond a few scraps of gossip he had pieced together, odds and ends picked up here and there, some on board and some ashore. He was afraid that without intent he had been playing the eavesdropper, and probably there was nothing in the business, nothing to worry about. Though he couldn't get away from the yarn Ah Fang had been spinning to him. But for that he would have put the whole rigmarole down for an empty Oriental fable. And even Ah Fang wasn't above suspicion. Anyhow, granting that everything was true, it was most unlikely that the junk would ever get through the blow that was coming on. And he hoped it wouldn't, fer he would be most desperately sorry if anything happened to old man Dane.

"Dane!" The name was charged with volcanic power. At one stroke all Dixon Gray's lethargy was shattered, the man converted to a palpitating note of interrogation. "Dane!" he repeated, bolt upright now in his chair. "What has your blessed junk got to do with him? What's the riddle, anyhow?"

By the widening of his eyes Macdonald proclaimed his astonishment at the outburst. "Ma certes, man," he retorted, "but you're like a Chinese firework, off ye flare as soon as ye feel the touch of the match. An' what, I'd like t' know, is Stephen Dane t' you? One might think he owed you some money. As for what I've heard mebbe it was nonsensical balderdash, that being the case wi' maist of the things ye hear; but all the same it fits in pretty well with some of the queer doings in these parts. As I've told you, I only picked up a few bits o' shakings, the interpretation thereof being that the junk's one of them piratical craft, and she's skippered by Mister Chung Won. An' I needn't remind ye of the manner of man he is. Sort o' first-class devil. Terror o' the seas. Anything else ye like, so long as ye put plenty of hot stuff in. As for the port he's bound for and the plan he's working by, I'll fetch Ah Fang, and ye can have it yourself at first hand. I've nae doot that a Crown Coonsel 'd be able t' pick his evidence t' pieces, but it's the maist that seems t' be available."

A swift glance as he left the cabin showed him that in the space of a few seconds the captain's face had turned a dusky tinge, that his eyes were ablaze with the fires of incredulity and horror; but Macdonald paid no further heed, and was soon back again with the Chinaman, who proved anything but a docile witness, and chiefly animated by a panicy sense of concern for his own safety.

"Me Klistian. Me velly good Chinaman. Klistian Chinaman," he nervously protested when Macdonald bade him "tip his yarn about Chung Won and his junk." His eyes darting from one man to the other, fingers nervously twisting and twining, he sought

refuge in a profession of complete ignorance. "Me no catchee catchee anything. Men talkee talkee. Ah Fang listen. That all. No savvy."

"And what was it you heard when you listened?" Gray demanded. "Come, out with it. You'll not get hurt for the truth, but—if you lie!"

The pause was charged with terrific threat, and Ah Fang knew it. Still washing his hands with invisible soap, his eyes never at rest, he plunged into a rambling, tangled tale. "Men talkee talkee at Kling's las' night. Say Chung Won velly bad man, him pilate, shoot an' chop chop with long piecee knife. Take women away. Always cally women off. Chung Won muchee muchee chief. Him going to Dane Island to kill Mista Dane. Men say Dane velly lich. Plenty heap money. Big box. Heap money bellied. Pilate take allee money and killee people, but not killee women. Pilate plenty big fellow. Him strong. Muchee muchee pilate." Ah Fang spread out his hands fanwise and shook his head dolorously. "Him kill and burn. No more store. No Dane. Allee same gone."

At the end of a cross-examination, on which even the Attorney-General might have plumed himself, the Chinaman glided silently away, and Macdonald pronounced a counsel of despair. "If the beggar's telling the truth, and the junk weathers the storm, it's all up with Dane. For there's naething t' be done. By rights the old man ought t' be warned, but there isn't a gunboat within saxty miles, and the island doesn't run to a telegraph wire. So I s'pose he'll just have t' tak' his chance. The wonder is that they haven't tried it on lang before. He's no right to have pitched his camp on such a howling wilderness of a God-forsaken spot."

That this was intended for his final word Macdonald showed by the way he settled in the corner of the settee, evidently prepared to take his ease. But it was the last moment of idleness he was destined to know for many crowded hours. For a few seconds Gray made no sound—simply stood there brooding, staring through the port without seeing anything, the hard moulding of his face, his whole bearing that of a man grappling with a crisis of magnitude. And then, suddenly, he became galvanised into passionate activity. "What's your steam-pressure, Mac?" he sharply demanded, and was told that "there could be a full head in an hour."

"Then, in half an hour I'll get the anchor," he announced. "And I'll want you to shake your old box of tricks up for all they're worth," he added.

"D'ye mean t' tell me——"

"That we're going to sea."

Bewilderment stamped on his face, Macdonald slowly rose. "But," he ventured, "look at the glass," and found that he had fired a mine.

"Damn the glass!" Gray hotly cried. "There are worse

things at sea than bad weather. Man alive, what do you take me for? Think of that junk. If it should reach Dane's Island first. All that it means."

Two hours later the *Nan-Ling* was shouldering her way heavily through a sullen sea, while her captain paced the bridge and the mate yapped fretfully against the scheme of things. "If the old tub stands this she'll stand anything. That glass. Five-sixteenths, sir. In an hour. Never saw such a rapid drop before. Though that isn't all. There's this," and he waved his hand around. "You can almost taste it."

The gesture was eloquently expressive. It embraced all that Gray was seeing and feeling. That profound calm, the flatness of the sea, its tremendous flatness, without a ripple or a curl, without anything except its feeble laboured lift, no life in it, its very movement suggesting impotence rather than energy. For it was so unlike the sea. That was the disconcerting truth — its unlikeness. There was its colour too, patches dull as the skin of a mummy, vast flakes of lustreless brass; the sky that seemed to have lost its height and in the deadness of its tones was like the sea; the windlessness, the air that scorched as the breath of Tophet.

Again and again the mate lifted up his voice in querulous complaint, but I doubt whether Gray heard a word of it. All his thought, his watchfulness, were concentrated on that menacing immensity and its allied powers not yet revealed; and he was watching with the grim, resolute purpose of one bent on wresting from the foe its secret, compelling it to expose its hand, its design, and its resources. And in the end he had his reward. When Nature changed her expression, like a woman passing from sullen brooding to the fierce passion of uncontrollable wrath, his eyes were on her face and he knew that the hour of trial was at hand. Into the bronze a purple tinge subtly crept, the edge of the horizon deepened to a dingy umber, and Gray turned to the mate with a string of orders. "Better have the decks cleared," he said. "All loose stuff stowed away. Extra lashings on everything. Life-lines rigged up. Then come back here and stand-by."

VI.

For himself, or about himself, as he waited on the bridge of the *Nan-Ling* for the impending onslaught, Dixon Gray had no thought. Nor had he any taste for an excursion into the realm of self-analysis. His attention was surrendered absolutely to his ship and his mission. Was the steamer equal to the call that was about to be made upon her? Would he reach the island in time? Beyond these two problems there were none others that mattered. Even in that

terrific hour when the tempest leaped upon them out of the ocean night's black throat, and he clung to the bridge-rail alone, lost in abysmal gloom, solid walls of water sheering athwart his course, he had no other thought,—simply to hold on and accomplish the task he had taken up. Once, about halfway through the night, just as he had left the shelter of the wheel-house for the tremendous tumult outside, he felt his arm tightly gripped, and the voice of Macdonald clamoured by his ear, many of his words picked from his lips by the wind and swept away. "Eh man, captain, is it you? What? This—wind—throttles everything. Thought — see —how getting along. It's awfu' below. Hoo—up here?" Sharp and confident came the response: "First-rate, Mac. Nothing—worry about. Worse to come—lot worse, but—old boat facing it finely—so far—and—" The crash of another comber on the deck applied a full-point to his statement, and the two men clung to each other in the darkness until the flood had swirled away. "That's what—like up here," Gray grimly bellowed. "And —nothing to what we're steaming to meet. Cyclone, you know — circular — may run through the edge—or—hit it —centre."

"All right." The chief relaxed his grip. "Drive her through it—if—like. I'll no mind — fetch t'other side.—Seen enough up here t' satisfy me. Awa' back—drier shop."

He had seen enough to satisfy. Though Gray caught the words he missed their double meaning; fancied that Macdonald spoke only of the storm. And he had greater work to do than spread himself out in idle chatter. He was the captain—the man on whom everything depended, success or disaster, life or death. He was supremely conscious of the fact, conscious in a way which marked the moment out from any other. Many times before had he realised his power, but always as a burdensome yoke. Now it gave him a sense of exaltation; he was proud of it, gloried in his responsibility. There was much to be done out here in the raging waste of the China Sea, and he was the man to do it. I do not mean that he thought all this or any of it, rather did he feel it, his kingship. For once he was sure of himself. Whatever doubt oppressed him was of the ship. He knew her age, her frailties, her decrepitude; knew that he must drive her to the limit of her endurance, demand as much from her as from a ship of the highest register.

That this phase of the tempest was but the prelude to the real onslaught he was assured. Experience, coupled with his study of the Law of Storms, afforded no loophole for comforting doubt. Nor was he tricked by the manner of the attack. Some men would have said that Nature had descended to a bluff, the sort of thing to fool a novice; but the moment Gray was sure of the fact, that brief slackening in the wind's persistence, he

clambered up the slant of the bridge with a warning for the mate.

"Look alive, Marquis," he cried, making a trumpet of his hands, "this isn't the beginning of the end. It's the beginning of the start. The real thing now."

That was all. His counsel of caution. His message delivered, he sidled away again; and Marquis, peering into the tenebrous environment, picked him out vaguely etched against the background of the night, fronting the storm, watching it, waiting for the advance of its reserve battalions. For every man aboard the night thenceforward was one of appalling isolation. They ceased to be a community, were converted into separate units; there was nothing they could be said to share except their peril. To the two on the bridge, the captain and his mate, all communication was denied; they might have been miles apart, were not really conscious of each other's presence, neither had any assurance of the other's survival. Even in the wheel-house and down in the engine-room the men were sundered entities, working only in unison by instinct and long training; while the crew, penned in their quarters, were in still worse case. For the others at least there was work to do, while these had laid upon them the nerve-racking task of waiting. They were held in the toils of the unseen and the unknown. Their world had lost its stability, its certainties; there was little left except that frantic tumult of motion, the pitch and roll of the ship, the straining of the hull as she rose, its grinding quiver when she dived, and the bared propeller, wrenched from the sea and thrust aloft, broke into a maddened race; and to all these again there was added the smothered crash as fragments of the ship were torn adrift by wind and sea, —as if their home, their refuge, was being rent asunder.

Disruption, annihilation piece-meal, this seemed to be the destiny of the *Nan-Ling*, the menace which impelled her captain to grope for the engine-room tube and hurl a disjointed message down its metallic throat. "How —doing—Mac? Bad. Very. Sounds as though ship—going —pieces. If only—could see. Everything—breaking adrift. But—go ahead—Dane's Island. You know—those pirates. Can't think—stand that." This was his dominant thought, the master-passion that inspired him. The defeat of a malevolent design. That was how it stood with him in those ebonised hours of blindness, and his will remained unaltered when vision was restored by the dawn and he saw what the wind and sea had done to his ship. As all the concealed outlines emerged from absolute nothingness into blurred reality, he was amazed that any craft could have suffered such havoc and yet remain afloat. The *Nan-Ling* was unrecognisable. Above the water-line nothing

looked to be the same. She had lost her identity. Twenty-four hours ago he would have asserted his power to pick her out among a hundred craft, but now she was a stranger. Yesterday she was one of the shabby genteels, and now she was a guttersnipe. Forward, the starboard rail from the fo'c'sle to the waist had vanished, and to balance this another length on the port quarter was missing, only some spiky jags suggesting that there had ever been a rail at all. Of the boats, the davits had nothing to show except a few trails of rope streaming out to leeward, but the extra lashings of the one he had kept in chocks on the deck had luckily held. The stanchions might have been pin-wire, so little resistance had they exercised; and the deck was almost bare.

Nor was there any token of this being the end. The dawn had merely given them vision without safety or the promise of it. The world was still filled with passion—a roystering distraction of crashing seas and ravening wind; and as for the *Nan-Ling*, all he could claim with certitude was that, so far, she had not failed him. But by noon he detected a weakening in the assault, and when night again enfolded them, he knew that he had beaten at least one of the foes for which he had risked so much. But only one. The secret of the junk and her crew was still hidden, and the *Nan-Ling* having survived one test, he now subjected her to another. She had proved her strength, and now she must give him speed. Through the storm he had concentrated all his skill and energy on the conquest of his elemental foe, now he focussed everything on the subjugation of space. He lived not for the voyage, but for the goal. All other interests, desires, duties, he barred outside, right to the very end of the hazardous enterprise, to that point of time when the mellow harmonies of the ocean night were shattered by the rasp of the anchor chain as it rushed through the hawse-pipe.

His landfall was in itself a tribute to his seamanship—a thing of magnificent exactitude. There was no beating about in search of bearings. An hour before midnight, the moon riding high in the heavens, the cry of "Land-ho!" rang cheerily out, and there, dead ahead, the island's puny peak lay like a wisp of cloud on the rim of the ocean plain.

"We were making for it," said Lanty Sanderson afterwards, "as true as a bullet from a gun."

After his own fashion Macdonald tried to say the same thing in a different way; but he might as well have addressed himself to the knighthead, for Gray was straining his eyes to read the message of the roadstead and the shore, and long before he had put the ship to an anchor the patched-up boat was swung out ready for his service.

"Don't fancy the look of things a bit, Mac!" he gloom-

ily declared. "Not a ship in the bay. Which means that if those devils have been here, they've had matters all their own way. And then there's the island,—did you ever set eyes on such a dead-looking spot?"

VII.

By the mere circumstance that the landfall was made by night, the crew of the *Nan-Ling* found that last phase of the voyage converted into an episode of high romance. Entering the roadstead by day the island would have flaunted its story before them, but now they must needs go in search of an answer to their uneasy questionings. Through the gauzy veil of night it loomed before them a place of mystery—an isle of sleep or one of death, of peaceful unconsciousness or ghastly tragedy. Prudence, of course, bade him wait for the dawn, but when he crossed the threshold of his goal, Dixon Gray parted with the power of waiting. The secret he must have surrendered to him now at any cost. In response to his call every man among the crew volunteered for service in the landing, almost fought for it; and when the boat sheered off he was accompanied by a trustable escort, men of thew and sinew, all keenly set on using their carbines, their cudgels, or even their iron-hard fists.

Though the distance from the ship to the shore was less than a mile, its impress was one of five. None of the band could be called visionaries; all save the captain were tremendously matter-of-fact, but mystery had laid its spell upon them, and the hour and the setting were alike tinged with unreality. All visible objects were distorted—not anything on sea or land within their range of sight corresponded to the actual. They were not even sure about the familiar strip of water-front, the dice-like squares of buildings, from Dane's store at one end to the bungalow of Trenton, the planter, at the other. It was all so lifeless, so appallingly still. It seemed as though nothing but a miracle could conjure life and movement from such an absolute negation. Their own approach, too, was made in silence, the oars muffled; except the subdued swish of the water as it slipped along the side, not a sound until the boat bumped against the fender of the jetty. Clambering at once on to the planking of the deck, they made their way with stealthy swiftness to the belt of trees beyond the narrow selvedge of the beach; and here Gray left them, and covered by their rifles struck out across the open, nor halted till he reached the store, the real end of his journey, the magnet which had lured him into the vortex of a

cyclone, the greatest of all his adventures. His feet crunching the shingle track, he stepped back and closely surveyed the moon-emblazoned building, every inch of its wide front, its balcony, its roof, and every window, and rejoiced in its freedom from the marks of strife. And yet he was not satisfied. This was merely suggestion, and he hungered for proof, the assurance of sight and speech. Though the signs were those of slumber, they might be those of death. If only he could pierce that screen of outer wall. This was like being in a fog at sea—one of those horrors of the Grand Banks, the same uncertainty, the same blindness. Only worse. For now there was so much more at stake. He wanted to beat upon the door, to cry out names aloud; one moment he told himself that the pirate quest had surely failed, and the next was overwhelmed by dread of the worst. And then, just as he tried the door and found it barred, a window creaked and creaked again; his alert ears caught the tread of a light foot on the balcony overhead, and in that moment he lost the store, the sea, the island, beheld nothing but the girl leaning over the rail, the burnish of the moonlight in her wayward hair coiled loosely about her head, a deep wonder glowing in her eyes.

"You!" she breathed very softly. "You!" Yet not so softly that he could not hear.

A wave of emotion shook him. "Thank God. You are safe. Thank God," he murmured, and the girl leaned still lower the better that she might read his story in his face. His gravity, the intense earnestness of his tone, impressed her deeply. No woman could hear a man speak thus about her without being moved.

"Why are you here?" she asked, but even as she spoke a new thought took possession of her, and she changed her question to a command, "Wait," and was gone. But only for a bunch of seconds, just long enough for him to leave the screen of shadow cast by the house and with uplifted hands signal to his men the sign they waited for that all was well; and then the key grated in the lock, and through the open door she came to meet him, a slip of bewitching girlhood, her white frock intensifying her atmosphere of fragility, her hair held captive now by the folds of a fleecy wrap. For a moment, as Gray grasped her hand in a long determined clasp, she held him with her eyes—those eyes whose lustre even case-hardened shell-backs trading at her father's store have likened to the glory of the stars, and their colour to the violet—and then she rained her questions upon him. "Now, tell me why you are here. So soon. And why did you speak so? What does it all mean? Tell me."

After the manner of those who dwell in Eastern lands did she address him, one accustomed

to command, and also to obedient service—but there was supplication also, an eagerness she made no attempt to suppress or disguise. "It is all so strange. Your landing now—by night. And why should you be thankful for my safety. I have not heard of any danger."

"But I have," he told her. "Great danger. Horrible. Too horrible to think of. It was Chung Won and his gang. They had planned a raid. Here,—on the store. Your father's money and you. But they have failed. That is why I am glad. It has been torture, a crucifixion, the thought that I might be too late. All through the storm. And to think that you should owe your safety to a cyclone."

"The storm," she repeated. "That terrible storm. And you—you fought your way through *that*—for me!"

She hung upon the words as though well pleased by the power that lay behind. This was her hour of discovery, the revelation of a stupendous fact. "For me." Very softly, dealing only with herself, she breathed those thrilling words again. Under the lantern light of the moon Gray saw that she was smiling, caught too the flood of colour as it flushed her cheeks."

"You came to save me," she murmured yet again; and then, "Tell me about it, please."

"There's nothing much to tell," he answered, bent now on making light of his exploit. "We were at Swatow when the gang put out to sea. Macdonald got wind of what they were up to, and wormed the rest out of one of the Chinamen. And we followed. That is all."

"All!" Her lips tossed the word back to him, rejected its assurance. "As if it could be. It is only a fragment. You have not even begun the tale. All this—the plot, its betrayal, your choice, the storm, your voyage,—a story big enough for a book, and you crowd it into a dozen words. But then you never did talk well about yourself, Captain Gray, and I'm thinking I shall have to ask Sandy Macdonald for the rest."

"There is no rest," he insisted. "And Mac is not a reliable witness. Not always. Sometimes he can be the soul of caution, but he has his enthusiasms, and his zeal outruns his discretion. I have given you the facts. There is nothing in it but this—I was lying to an anchor waiting for the storm to break and spend itself when that Chinaman came along with his yarn, and as there was no warship we could warn we came ourselves. There's nothing more to tell. I'm sorry to have disturbed you, but I couldn't wait for to-morrow. I—I—wanted to make sure that you were safe. And you are. Now you must get back indoors and I'll away to the ship. We have much work to do. Repairs. She was badly knocked about."

His suggestion of departure she ignored; to his outstretched hand she gave the same treatment. Almost did it seem that

the had forgotten the man, every atom of her interest dominated by his revelation. For against her woman's wit his reticence was powerless, it concealed nothing that really mattered, while for other weapons she had her share in the life of the East, her deep acquaintance with sailor-men and the ways of the sea.

"All this for me," she half whispered, a blend of wonder that was almost awe, and assuredly the spirit of joy in her voice. "When other men sheltered. With that storm about to break. And the glass —I watched its fall—it was terrible." Then she laid a hand on his arm. "Do you know what you did, Dixon Gray? You challenged death. Braved it. Risked your life—everything. You, who—told me once upon a time that you —you—would never ask any woman to—take your name because—it was the name of—a—coward. Do you remember that day? All you told me about yourself, the portrait you painted? I have never forgotten it, not a word. And that was the name you chose—coward. That and Mr Much Afraid. And yet you have done this thing—for me."

"There has been much joy in the service," he told her, forcing himself to a stiffness of speech, and yet for all his strength and grip not quite succeeding. "And now you must let me bid you good-night."

But still she held him. "To think of it!" she said. "All that it means. How glad you must be! You will not need to be distressed any longer about your name, nor the — the woman to be ashamed of it. You were wrong, you see. You are not Mr Much Afraid. You have risked your life to—save another — mine. You are a brave man, Captain Gray."

"A brave man!" he repeated, not yet comprehending the import of her testimony, all that it involved, its fulness and its promise. He had merely a dim impression that life had somehow changed with him, that he himself was different; but his perspective was all out of focus — formless and intangible. Her eyes strangely ashine, the girl stepped back into the shadows and watched him, her fingers tightly interlocked, a passionate intensity in her gaze. It was just as though she commanded him to see himself as she beheld him — the valiant knight, and not the craven. Once when she moved, Gray thrust out a hand to stay the flight he fancied that she meant; and then at the end of it all — that extremity of silent waiting — she saw the strain fade from his face, knew that the hour of illumination had dawned, and the next moment found herself clasped in his arms.

"My dear," he cried, "I see it all now! It is a new man who has landed on your isle to-night. See what a miracle you have wrought!"

But she refused to accept his tribute, his praise.

"There is no miracle," she protested. "Nothing but just the old, old story. The tale

as old as the hills. You will find it in the Book. In the day of your fear you only had yourself. But then Love came, and Love casteth out fear."

VIII.

On the judgment of Margaret Dane the chief engineer of the *Nan-Ling* pronounced an emphatic benediction.

"Man, but that's a bonny way o' putting it," he declared when Gray told him what the girl had said. And then he turned it over. "Love casteth oot fear," and kept on repeating the words as though loth to let them go. "D'ye know," he said at last, "I can see that this is the varra thought I've had at the back o' ma own mind all the time, only I was too slow in the uptak' t' dress it oot in proper words. She's got the gift of vision, has this lassie o' yours, an' the power o' speech as well. Love casteth oot fear. A full interpretation in four varra modest words. And noo we'd better turn in, for——"

But the captain waved the suggestion aside.

"Look here, Mac," he demanded, "was this the cure you had in mind that night aboard the *Argonaut*?"

"It was, my son," Macdonald answered. "You see, I'm no' saying that you've lived a selfish life, but you were fearful self-centred. You'd neither kith nor kin t' fend for nor tak' thought aboot, nor any other responsibeelity t' steel you to high endeavour. An' it isn't good for a man t' have his vision turned in upon himself. It narrows him, helps t' make him little and keep him so. And in some cases it breeds fear. In a general way—mind, I'm no' saying it's always so, but in a general way—bravery has its beginning in taking thought for others. A hen by hersel' wad run away fra a rat, but if she's got a brood o' chickens she'll stand up till an elephant. And that I reckon is hoo it was with yersel'. You were aye thinking aboot Dixon Gray, and the saving of your own skin grew t' be your first law. Even so you might have won through without raising any ghosts, only you'd been fitted with a high-pressure imagination, one of extra-driving power, an' right fra' the beginning you'd a mighty poor chance of escape. The rest of your history can be packed in little room—the gods have been good t' you; they've led you by a lang trail to this bit island, an' this night they've given you something t' live for and fight for. Likewise, they've given you a better law. Self-preservation's varra poor stuff. An' that's the last word. I'm turning in, for I reckon we've a couple o' crowded days in front of us before we've got this hooker ship-shape again."

Here, however, Macdonald was guilty of error. Only by the labour of four strenuous

days was the *Nan-Ling* made fit once more to face the hazard of the seas, though even then the garb of respectability was in no wise restored to her. In fact, judged by externals, all that the hand of restoration had accomplished was to make her still more disreputable, to complete her garb of desolation. By the storm she had been degraded from the shabby genteel to the guttersnipe, and now she suggested the prize-fighter carrying the scars of a terrific milling. That was how she struck the fancy of Stephen Dane in that hour of the fifth afternoon which he spent in a shady corner of the balcony with Sandy Macdonald to bear him company, Gray being still engaged on the ship. "Looks like a blooming bruiser, eh, Macdonald," Dane suggested. "One who's had a tremendous slogging. All patch and plaster from stem to stern, from her water-line to the rim of her smoke-stack." The chief endorsed the comparison with a chuckle, and presently Dane drifted away and Margaret took his place. In all probability if Macdonald had only foreseen what the coming of the girl involved he would have burked the ordeal by flight, but no warning was given him, he was caught before he had time to suspect. Not even when Margaret began quietly to probe into the history of her lover and himself did he detect her drift. It seemed so innocently reasonable that she should be interested in the fate that had thrown them together, the fancy that had forged such a link of affinity and impelled them to sail for so long in company as the firmest of friends. "I have never seen such a David and Jonathan pair," she smilingly confessed. "I'm told that you might have been chief of a first-class boat, and yet in the name of friendship you abandon yourself to a wretched tub like the *Nan-Ling*." Then, without giving him time for a word, she switched off to the present adventure. "Isn't it queer how things work out?" she demanded, edging round until she squarely confronted him. "About this testing of Dixon, you know. Queer how big things hang on little ones." The chatter of a Chinaman, that was the little thing by which her sense of wonder had been caught; and the big thing for which that chatter formed a most wonderful peg was the redemption of Dixon Gray, coupled with the salvage of her own idyll. "You see," she pointed out, "there would have been no test, no anything but lifelong misunderstanding, if Ah Fang hadn't talked so loudly." And then, "What a lucky thing that you were standing by when he lifted up his voice." She laughed softly over the thought, confessed herself immensely attracted by it; and Macdonald, bending forward, peered closely into her face, distressfully alert to the mocking curl of her lip, the roguish challenge in her eyes. "Imph!" he snapped at last. "I might

have known. There's no keeping anything fra a woman body, especially if she happens t' be in love. Mebbe I shouldn't have done it, for it's been a fearful risk—though I never thought of that; I was so keenly set on Gray being given a chance t' prove himself a man through and through, that I clean forgot all aboot the crew and the ship and masel'. He'd got t' be tested; I've seen that for a lang while, and I've been waiting till — till he found Margaret Dane. It couldn't ha' been done withoot her."

"Nor without Ah Fang," Margaret drily suggested.

"He's another of the principals," Macdonald admitted. "He played up till me in a maist satisfactory fashion, and tipped his varra convincing recital aboot Chung Won like a born actor."

"At a price," she hazarded.

"It was dirt cheap, Missy," Macdonald assured her. "I gave him ten sovereigns for his sarvices, the pirate yarn being included in the contract. Since then I've seen the danger of him blabbing, an' I've made him a man o' wealth by the gift of another ten for keeping a stopper on his jaw tackle. Likewise, I've promised him that if he does happen t' talk I'll put an end to his life, and call doon a thoosand curses on the spirits of his ancestors. I was bound t' take strong measures. I wouldn't have the skipper know if it cost me every penny I've got; it would take all the edge off it for him. An' for the same reason, I'm thinking ye'll no' tell him yersel', lassie. Love hasn't finished its work when it's cast the fear outside."

OSWALD WILDRIDGE.

SIR WALTER RALEGH.

THREE hundred years ago Sir Walter Ralegh, a hero eminent in arms and arts, perished on the scaffold. The infamy of his belated and judicial murder turned to his favour the current of popular opinion, yet the voice of detraction was not silenced, and even to-day the scandal of his death casts a shadow upon his greatness. Therefore are we of this present day bound in gratitude to remember, at the tercentenary of his disgrace, the eminent services which he did to his Queen and his native land. A true Elizabethan, he engrossed the activities of his age. There breathed within him the very spirit of English enterprise. No field of adventure was closed to his courage and energy. He was courtier, soldier, seaman, and poet; he set his hand to no task which he had not well considered, nor, when fortune failed him, did he lose heart or renounce faith in the future. To him, among other boons, we owe our Empire overseas, and it is fitting that we should do him honour in this year when we are fighting, with that Empire's help, a foe bitterer and more implacable than the Spaniard, to whom Ralegh gave neither rest nor mercy.

I.

Walter Ralegh was born in 1552 at Hayes Barton, in Devonshire. The son of a country gentleman, he is said by John Hooker to have carried the blood of the Plantagenets in his veins, and even if this be a fable, as some assert, no slur can be cast upon his honourable descent. His boyhood he spent among the sailors of the Devon coast, heard what stories they had to tell him of the mysterious West, and caught from them that love of adventure which left him only with his death. For a while he sojourned at Oxford — a commoner of Oriel College, where, says Wood, "his natural parts being strangely advanced by Academical learning under the care of an excellent tutor, he became the ornament of the Juniors, and was worthily esteemed a proficient in Oratory and Philosophy." Oxford did not detain him long. He was of those who pick up their learning as they go, who read on shipboard or in the field, and he was no more than seventeen when he took service as a volunteer with the Huguenot army. He fought at Jarnac, and in Languedoc helped to smoke out the Catholics. "I saw in the third civil war in France," he wrote many years afterwards in his 'History of the World,' "certain caves which had but one entrance, and that very narrow, cut out in the midway of high rocks, which

we knew not how to enter by any ladder or engine, till at last by certain bundles of straw let down by an iron chain, and a weighty stone in the midst, those who defended it were so smothered as they rendered themselves with their plate, money, and other goods therein hidden." For at least six years he remained in France, since Hakluyt, in a dedication, calls to mind that Ralegh had "spent more years in France than he," and we know that five years were the term of Hakluyt's sojourn. At any rate, in 1576 Ralegh was in London again, contributing a copy of verses to the 'Steel Glass' of Gascoigne, whom he may have met in the Low Countries, and prophesying in an aphorism his own future—

> "For whoso reaps renown above the rest,
> With heaps of hate shall surely be oppresst."

After an ineffectual voyage of discovery, in which he commanded the *Falcon*, whose motto—*Nec mortem peto, nec finem fugio*—might have been his own, Ralegh sailed, the captain of a hundred men, for Ireland. That country was proving its intense love of independence, as it has proved it since, by welcoming the enemies of England to land upon its shores. So there came to Munster seven hundred Spaniards and Italians, who told the Lord-Deputy roundly that "they were sent, some from the most holy Father the Pope of Rome," as Camden reports, "and the rest from the most Catholic King of Spain, to whom he had given Ireland: Queen Elizabeth being fallen from it by reason of her Heresy." This kindly forethought of the Pope brought a due reward to his emissaries. Then happened what has always happened in Ireland. The foreigners, seeing no hope of succour from Desmond, put forth a white flag, crying "Misericordia! Misericordia!" No mercy was shown them, and there seems no reason why they should have been treated with forbearance. At Lord Grey's command, and with the approval of the gentle Spenser, Ralegh put six hundred of them to the sword, acting in accord with his own belief that "leniency to bloody-minded malefactors is cruelty to good and peaceable citizens."

II.

Such was Walter Ralegh's apprenticeship to life, and having served it he came triumphantly to Court. That his triumph should have been instant is not strange. Elizabeth loved a man, and a man Ralegh assuredly was. He was also a Devonshire gentleman, and Oxford's ill-humoured jest that he was a Jack and an Upstart savours of jealousy, He was tall, handsome, and bold. He was, moreover, of a boisterous temper, one who brooked not insult nor opposi-

tion.[1] Already he had been committed to the Fleet for a quarrel with Sir Thomas Perrott, and to the Marshalsea with one Wingfield "for a fray beside the Tennis-Court at Westminster." His pride and arrogance were the wonder of a proud age. "Old Sir Robert Harley of Brampton-Brian Castle," so Aubrey tells us, "who knew him, would say 'twas a great question who was the proudest, Sir Walter, or Sir Thomas Overbury, but the difference that was, was judged on Sir Thomas's side." To yield to Overbury in pride need have shamed no man, and we may take it that Ralegh was furnished with that triple brass which was necessary to protect him against the slings and arrows of a hard extravagant age. And not only was he a man of action, he was a man of speech also. Aubrey says his voice was "small," but it was persuasive; and the broad Devonshire accent, which Ralegh never lost, added to its effectiveness. His first meeting with the Queen, at Greenwich, was fortunate for him. He came from Ireland to urge his policy against Lord Grey's, and so much the better had he in the telling of his tale, that, in Naunton's words, "he had gotten the Queen's ear in a trice, and she began to be taken by his elocution, and . . . took him for a kind of oracle, which nettled them all."

Moreover, Ralegh chimed with his Queen and her age in his love of magnificence. He loved humility neither of apparel nor of life. He was no starveling soul content with a crust. His fixed intent was to get out of the world whatever of honour and wealth it had to give. "Shall we value honour and riches," he asks in the preface to his 'History,' "at nothing, and neglect them, as unnecessary and vain?" As to the answer he is in no doubt. "Certainly no: for that infinite wisdom of God, which hath . . . made differences between beasts and birds; created the eagle and the fly, the cedar and the shrub; and among stones, given the fairest tincture to the ruby, and the quickest light to the diamond; hath also ordained kings, dukes, or leaders of the people, magistrates, judges, and other degrees among men." He was an eagle who would always soar sunwards, and leave the poor fly happy upon the window pane. At the very first he showed his wit in his apparel, and well it became him. Drexelius, the Flemish Jesuit, says that the mere jewels in his shoes were estimated to be worth six thousand six hundred gold pieces; yet so fine was his delicacy that when he was appointed to attend Biron, the French ambassador, he instantly conformed to the fashion of his guest. "The French," said he, "wear all black, and no kind of bravery at all; so as I have only made

[1] Ben Jonson tells us that when Ralegh's son, of whom he was governor in Paris, made a scandal in the street, "young Ralegh's mother delighted much (saying his father young was so inclined) though the father abhorred it."

me a black taffeta suit to be in, and leave all my other suits."

Such a man as Ralegh, then, was welcomed naturally by a Queen who had inherited her father's love of pageantry and a splendid life, who was never so happy as when upon a progress, and who loved to see what she called "proper men" about her. The legends preserved by Fuller of Ralegh's sudden rise need not be accepted literally. They are, nevertheless, fitting symbols of the truth. Who would willingly part with the story of the cloak, for instance? "This Captain Ralegh," says Fuller, "coming out of Ireland to the English Court in good habit (his clothes being then a considerable part of his estate) found the Queen walking, till meeting with a plashy place, she seemed to scruple going thereon. But presently Ralegh cast and spread his new plush cloak on the ground, whereon the Queen trod gently, rewarding him afterwards with many suits for his so free and seasonable tender of so fair a foot-cloth." So Fuller writes with essential truth. Had Ralegh met the Queen in a plashy place, he would surely have flung his cloak upon the ground; and why should not fate have given an occasion for his courtliness? The other anecdote of Fuller suggests a knowledge of the after-event, and is justly suspect. "Fain would I climb, but that I fear to fall"—such are the words that Ralegh is said to have scratched with a diamond upon a window, obvious to the Queen's eye, and they might have carried a heavy burden of meaning for him when he looked back across the years to his happy beginning. He knew himself then to have been what many called him, a mere tennis-ball of fate, and he had wise words to say about the tricks of destiny. "As fortune's man rides the horse," thus he wrote in the Tower, "so fortune herself rides the man who, when he is descended on foot, the man taken from his beast, and fortune from the man, a base groom beats the one, and a bitter contempt spurns the other with equal liberty." But, assuredly, he did not foresee, in the exulting flamboyancy of his youth, the misery which was to overtake him.

A man of his sanguine temper and gay adventurousness was troubled by no doubt. It was enough for him to bask in the sun of Gloriana's smiles, and Gloriana did more than smile upon him. When once she had taken him for a favourite, she loaded him with benefits. He was given a licence to export woollen broadcloths; the Farm of Wines was granted him. In rapid succession he was appointed Lord Warden of the Stanneries, Lieutenant of Cornwall, Vice-Admiral of Cornwall and Devon, and Captain of the Queen's Guard. With the increase of honour he increased marvellously in worldly possessions. The acquisition of Babington's forfeited estates made him a landowner in five English counties. The castle of Lismore and the manor of Youghal gave him a position

in the Ireland which he had helped to punish and to pacify. And at last he established himself in the place he loved best —at Sherborne, where his beautifying hand may still be marked. Wherever he went he builded and he planted. He took a natural delight in fine houses and handsome gardens. They were the outward expression of the grandeur which he deemed his right, and as intimate a part of him as the ships which he knew well how to build and to sail, and which he hoped always against hope would bring him a vast store of gold and precious stones from the Orinoco.

To be a favourite of Elizabeth was an ill trade, as Ralegh presently discovered to his cost. Not only did the Queen for her sport play one off against the other, but in her eyes the rising star seemed always to shine more brightly than the risen. And Ralegh aroused the jealousy of his rivals the more easily because they recognised in him an intellectual superior. He had a better head, as well as a better heart, than they. If he did not yield to Leicester in the graces, he was master of a knowledge and a courage of which that courtier knew nothing. But Leicester's power was already waning when Ralegh first encountered his Queen, and it was the advent of Essex at Court which threatened his supremacy. When he was but twenty-one, Essex was already writing to Elizabeth of that knave Ralegh, and it was only the threat of the Armada which interrupted his plottings against the man in whose influence he saw the chief obstacle to his omnipotence.

In the battle against Spain, who in her pride thought she could overthrow the might of England, Ralegh took the ample share that belonged to him. He was of those who planned the defence of the country; he stirred to patriotism the men of Cornwall and Devon, who, for the love they bore him, would have followed him to the death; and when the time of fighting came, his ship hung on to the skirts of the retreating Spaniards until the end. Moreover, when certain hotheads urged Howard of Effingham straightway to board the Spanish ships, Ralegh threw his influence into the scale of prudence and good sense; and in his 'History' seized upon the siege of Agrigentum as an excuse for a wise comment on the greatest of sea-battles. "To clap ships together," thus he wrote, "without consideration belongs rather to a madman than to a man-of-war. By such an ignorant bravery was Peter Strozzi lost at the Azores when he fought against the Marquess of Santa Cruz. In like sort had Lord Charles Howard, Admiral of England, been lost in the year 1588, if he had not been better advised than a great many malignant fools were that found fault with his demeanour. The Spaniards had an army aboard them, and he had none. They had more ships than he had, and of higher building and charging, so that had he entangled himself with those great and powerful vessels he

had greatly endangered this kingdom of England, for twenty men on the defence are equal to a hundred that board and enter. Whereas, then, contrariwise, the Spaniards had an hundred for twenty of ours to defend themselves withal. But our Admiral knew his advantage and held it, which had he not done he had not been worthy to have held his head." There speaks one who combines with the authority of an expert a rare gift of lucid exposition.

III.

The great year of our history, 1588, saw Ralegh at the zenith of his fortune. So high had he climbed that envy and malice were already fitting their slings with pebbles. Nevertheless, at the zenith of his fortune, he was but at the beginning of his great career. So long as the Queen smiled upon him, his work remained unaccomplished. When he did his native land his noblest services, he was thwarted at every step by jealousy and intrigue. The mere favourite triumphed; the patriot found fiercer enemies at home than abroad. A brief year after the Armada Ralegh left the Court, driven thence, it is said, by the plots of a rival. "My Lord of Essex," wrote Sir Francis Allen to Anthony Bacon, "hath chased Mr Ralegh from the court, and hath confined him in Ireland." Whether this be true or not, it is certain that Ralegh withdrew himself to Kilcolman, and there renewed his ancient friendship with Spenser. It was a happy meeting for the poets and for poetry, a meeting which Spenser has commemorated in beautiful verse. As he sat by the Mulla's shore,

"There a strange shepherd chanced to find me out,
Whether allured by my pipe's delight,
Whose pleasing sound yshrilled far about,
Or thither led by chance, I know not right,
Whom, when I asked from what place he came,
And how he hight, himself he did ycleepe,
The Shepherd of the Ocean, by name,
And said he came far from the Main-sea-deep."

"The Shepherd of the Ocean"—what better name could be found for Walter Ralegh? Thus by Mulla's shore the two friends talked and sang. They exchanged compliments in verse, and Ralegh, enthusiastic always for fresh enterprises, insisted that Spenser should forthwith accompany him to Court, there to win the patronage of Elizabeth, and to publish the first part of the "Faerie Queen." Of Ralegh's fidelity to Spenser there is ample proof. He gave him praise, and, what is rarer and more useful, he gave him practical aid. Had it not been for his intervention, the "Faerie Queen" would have made a late appearance, and when in 1590 she saw the light of day under his auspices, he appended his sonnets to the poem, which show clearly enough his appre-

ciation. That which begins "Methought I saw the grave where Laura lay," is universally acclaimed, and has won from Milton the high tribute of imitation. In the other, Ralegh sounds the trumpet of generous applause—

"Of me no lines are loved nor letters are of price,
Of all which speak our English tongue, but those of thy device."

This friendship, then, was pleasant and honourable to them both, and, be it remembered, they sang in amœbæan strains, not as patron and poet, but as equals. For Ralegh also was himself a true poet. Careless, like the rest of his contemporaries, about the fate of his verses, he wrote them to please himself, and did not trouble to gather them together. Some of them appeared in 'England's Helicon,' signed by Ignoto, others have been discovered by the research of scholars. That they were known to his own age and highly esteemed we know from Puttenham. "For ditty and amorous ode," says he in his 'Arte of English Poesie,' "I find Sir Walter Ralegh's vein most lofty, insolent, and passionate." His style is concise and forcible. He had that love of aphorism which was natural to his time and kind. And none but a true poet could have written his "Pilgrimage":

"Give me my scallop-shell of quiet,
My staff of faith to lean upon,
My scrip of joy, immortal diet,
My bottle of salvation,
My gown of glory, hope's true gage;
And then I'll take my pilgrimage."

These lines, beautiful in themselves, are a foreshadowing of the mystical poetry of the seventeenth century.

Yet it was his prose rather than his verse which has given Ralegh an immortality of letters. The enforced leisure of his voyages taught him to be a scholar, and the friendship of Cotton persuaded him to join Bishop Parker's Society of Antiquaries. Of his masterpiece in prose—'The History of the World'—something will be said presently. Of his voyages he wrote like a man of action, who was also a poet; his political pamphlets are marvels of sound doctrine and clear statement; and there is not one of his letters—"lofty, insolent, and passionate," like his verse—that does not reveal the touch of the true craftsman. If you would have an example, turn to the letter which he wrote to Cecil on the death of his wife. "It is true," said he, "that you have lost a good and virtuous wife, and myself an honourable friend and kinswoman. But there was a time when she was unknown to you, for whom you then lamented not. She is now no more yours, nor of your acquaintance, but immortal, and not needing or knowing your love or sorrow. Therefore you shall but grieve for that which now is as then it was, when not yours; only bettered by the difference in this, that she hath passed the wearisome journey of this dark world, and hath possession of her inheritance." And again, in the same letter: "The minde of man is that part of God which is in us, which, by

how much it is subject to passion, by so much it is farther from Him that gave it us. Sorrows draw not the dead to life, but the living to death."[1] Here is noble thought matched with noble words, written by one who did not lay aside his gift of literature when he addressed his friends.

Indeed, courtier and adventurer though he was, Ralegh lived on easy terms with the writers of his time. It is said that he proposed those meetings at the Mermaid Tavern which had a legendary influence upon English poetry and English wit. He befriended Hakluyt, and aided him in his epic enterprise. That Marlowe should have been his associate is not surprising, since they are close akin in temperament. In Marlowe's plays there has been noted a love of the impossible. A love of the impossible was the inspiration of Ralegh's active life; and he was content to suffer for the friendship of Marlowe as he suffered for his loyalty to other friends. A foolish charge of atheism was brought against him who never wrote a word nor did a deed that was not a refutation of the foul calumny. But jealousy of those who rise too quickly is always ingenious, and Ralegh paid a heavier penalty for his virtues than the most of men pay for their vices.

IV.

However, it was not intrigue that at last caused Ralegh's downfall at Court. He had withstood the devilish machinations of Essex; he could not withstand the Queen's anger at his marriage with Elizabeth Throgmorton, one of her maids of honour. The Queen did not easily forgive the defection of her favourites, and she fell upon Ralegh with an unrestrained fury. With no better reason than her displeasure, she sent both Ralegh and his lady to the Tower, and enlarged him only when his services were needed to save the great carrack, the *Madre de Dios*, which his expedition, commanded by Martin Frobisher, had brought home, from indiscriminate pillage. Then the Queen's avarice got the better of her resentment, and Ralegh was permitted to go to Dartmouth, "still the Queen of England's poor captive." He liked his imprisonment as little as the eagle likes its cage. This foretaste of suffering,

[1] It is strange that the fanatical persons who can believe in nothing so obvious as that Shakespeare wrote his own plays, should have pitched upon Bacon for a substitute. Ralegh would have been a far wiser choice. And here is a parallel ready to their hand. "Sorrows draw not the dead to life, but the living to death," writes Ralegh; and Shakespeare in 'All's Well that Ends Well' puts these words in Lafeu's mouth: "Moderate lamentation is the right of the dead; excessive grief the enemy of the living." Shakespeare could not have known Ralegh's words, and Ralegh was far too sincere to plagiarise in an hour of deep emotion.

whose cup he was to drink to the dregs, was bitter in his mouth. He protested, he cajoled, he flattered. He tells Cecil that he has become "like a fish cast on dry land, gasping for breath, with lame legs and lamer lungs." Angrily he protests to Admiral Howard at the chafing of captivity. "Would God it were all concluded," says he, "that I might feed the lions as I go by, to save labour. For the torment of the mind cannot be greater, and for the body, would others did respect themselves as much as I value it not little." And then it was that he wrote the letter to Cecil about the Queen, which seems to the modern eye abject in its abandonment. He laments to hear that she has gone far off. When she was near at hand, and he might hear of her, his sorrows were less. "I that was wont to behold her," he writes in a famous passage, "riding like Alexander, hunting like Diana, walking like Venus, the gentle wind blowing her fair hair about her pure cheeks, like a nymph; sometime sitting in the shade like a goddess; sometime singing like an angel; sometime playing like Orpheus. Behold the sorrow of the world! 'Once amiss, hath bereaved us of all!'"

The very extravagance of the tirade proves its insincerity, and we, in the full knowledge of the truth, need not take it seriously. Intended for the Queen's eye, it was overcharged in colour and design. But Elizabeth, who never saw her face in the mirror unfarded, cared not for the finer shades. She demanded always an excess of praise, and she got it. Nor was Ralegh under any illusion. Freedom was what he longed for, and there were no words which he would not have used to attain it. The Court and the Queen's favour were for him but means to an end. He knew that without them he could not achieve the lofty purposes of his life, and the work to which he had put his hand was so vast in scope that he would sacrifice its fulfilment to no scruple of reticence. It was for his career that he abased himself before the Queen. For the rest, he was a gainer by her frowns. If he had lost her patronage, he had won the loyal and constant support of his wife, whose broken letters to Cecil attest the depth of her affection, who stood by Ralegh in the hour of his peril and distress, and who fought without rest for the inheritance of her son. And Ralegh generously repaid her fidelity. "I chose you," he said, in a letter which he thought would be his last, "and I loved you, in my happiest times."

V.

To two policies Ralegh was always faithful—the discomfiture of Spain, whom he recognised truly as the enemy of England, and the foundation of another England across the seas. The policies were so closely interlocked as to be

sometimes indistinguishable, for the Spaniards claimed the right of sovereignty over all America, and were supported in their impudent claim by the authority of the Pope. That we should be at war with Spain, then, was inevitable, and Ralegh fought the Spaniards with sword or tongue as long as he had breath. His letters are packed with warnings against the enemy. He watched their activities in Ireland unceasingly. "The King of Spain," he wrote to Cecil in 1593, "seeking not Ireland for Ireland, but having raised up troops of beggars in our backs, shall be able to enforce us to cast our eyes over our shoulders, while those before us strike us on the brains." He watched the coast anxiously for Spanish vessels, knowing that his own Plymouth was in danger, and he urged Parliament not to wait the coming of the Spaniard, but to go forth and meet him. "Let us send a royal army," said he to the House of Commons in 1593, "to supplant him in Brittany, and to possess ourselves there; and send also a strong navy to sea, and lie with it upon the Cape and such places as his ships bring his riches to, that we may set upon all that come. This we are able to do, and we shall undoubtedly have fortunate success if we undertake it." This is the speech of a fighting sailor who knew full well what sea-power meant to England. "There are two ways by which England may be afflicted," he wrote in 'A Discourse Touching a War with Spain.' "The one by invasion, being put to the defensive, in which we shall cast lots for our own garments. The other by impeachment of our trades, by which trades all commonwealths flourish and are enriched. Invaded or impeached we cannot be lost but by sea, and, therefore, that enemy that is strongest by shipping is most to be suspected and feared." Nor was he willing to hold out his hand for a premature peace. "After the Spaniards shall have repaired his losses," said he, "I know not how your Majesty may be assured of his enmity, for the Kings of Spain are not wont to keep either promises or oaths longer than they may prove profitable to themselves." This is a wise counsel, which our rulers of to-day would do well to ponder.

And Ralegh did not only speak against Spain; he fought against Spain. As I have said, he gallantly played his part in the defeat of the Armada. At Cadiz, in the *War-Spright*, he led the van, captured the *St Andrew* and the *St Matthew* before the Spaniards could blow them up, and brought them home with him to serve in the English navy. When the victory was won, merciful as always, he helped to beat off the Flemings, who, having done nothing in the fight, afterwards used pitiless slaughter, and sketched the scene indelibly in two or three lines. "Withal," wrote he, "there was so huge fire, and such tearing of the ordnance in the great *Philip* and the rest, when the fire came to them,

as, if any man had a desire to see Hell itself, it was there most livelily figured." Thus Walter Ralegh was justly accounted the great antagonist of Spain, and nowhere did he fight her more resolutely than in America. He would forestall her everywhere, and see to it that a new England and not a new Spain should come into being. For it is his great glory to have sought always the welfare of the natives in such lands as he discovered. The Spaniards of the sixteenth century, like the Germans of our own time, thought it enough to make a desert and to call it peace. Ralegh contemned the vindictive fury of such colonists. He would bring prosperity wherever he went; he would encourage trade, and exchange the commodities of the old world for the rich produce of the new. Obsessed as he was with the constant vision of gold and precious stones, he did not disdain the humbler solace of tobacco and the potato. If Drake and Hawkins first brought tobacco to these shores, it was Ralegh who made its use fashionable, and thus not only increased our stock of harmless pleasures, but added vastly to the wealth of the country.[1] And by planting potatoes at Youghal he supplied the land, where he had great possessions, with its staple food.

Ralegh's first enterprise across the seas was shared with his gallant brother, Sir Humphrey Gilbert, who had less hope of establishing colonies than of finding the North-West Passage—a hope which lured many a brave man to his death. That was in 1583, and Ralegh, already a favourite, was forbidden by the Queen to risk his life in "dangerous sea-fights." But to Sir Humphrey she gave her blessing, and for a token "an anchor guided by a lady," which he wore at his breast. Like all the early voyagers Gilbert met with a series of mishaps, and was fortunate only in making Newfoundland, of which he took possession in the Queen's name. Sailing southward, he was overtaken by a violent storm; two of his ships were wrecked, and he himself went down, "sitting abaft with a book in his hand," and telling his men to be of good cheer, since "we are as near to Heaven by sea as by land."

It is characteristic of Ralegh that failure never daunted him, and after his brother's heroic death he applied for instantly and was granted a charter to discover unknown lands. In 1584, though he was still kept at home, an English colony was established, under his auspices, by Philip Amadas and Arthur Barlow at Roanoake, and to this colony was given the name of Virginia. Amadas and Barlow, as bidden

[1] Aubrey was assured by Mr Michael Weekes of the Royal Society, "out of the custom-house books, that the custom of tobacco all over England was £400,000 per annum" (1682).

by Ralegh, treated the natives with justice and consideration, exchanged such goods as they had for sweet-smelling timber and other commodities, and then sailed for home, bringing with them two of the savages. A year later, Sir Richard Grenville was despatched with "a fleet of seven sails, with one hundred householders and many things necessary to begin a new state." But no sooner were the householders landed than discontent overtook them. They encountered a tribe of savages less easily managed than those whom their predecessors had traded with, and when Sir Francis Drake, "coming thither from the sack of divers Spanish towns," visited the colony, they did not scruple to accept his offer of a safe conduct to England. Even then Ralegh did not despair. He sent expedition after expedition, sparing neither his wealth nor his thought. As Hakluyt said, "it required a prince's purse to have it thoroughly followed out," and Ralegh must needs depend chiefly upon himself. Cecil blew hot and cold upon the project according to the whim and temper of the Queen. But with the prescience of a great statesman, Ralegh permitted no check and no discouragement. In 1602, the year of the Queen's death, a few months before ruin overtook him, Ralegh wrote to Cecil protesting against the seizure of part of a cargo of sassafras for the tenths. "It were pity to overthrow the enterprise," said he, "for I shall yet live to see it an English nation." His prophecy came true, though his charter had by then reverted to the Crown, and he had been deprived of the reward which should in justice have been his. He did see it an English nation, and thus did more to change the history of his own country and of the world than any victorious captain that ever laid low a barbarous enemy. For, foiled himself, he pointed out the true way of colonial enterprise, and proved himself, in effect, the only begetter of our dominions oversea.

VI.

Meanwhile his thoughts were turning always towards the fabled wealth of Guiana. El Dorado, first conceived of as a gold-besprinkled king, and then as the golden city of Manoa, had captured his imagination. His ambition was stirred by Francisco Lopez' account of the Emperor of Guiana, all the vessels of whose home, table and kitchen, were of gold and silver. "He had in his wardropp," said Lopez, "hollow statues of gold which seemed giants, and the figures in proportion and bigness of all the beasts, birds, trees, and herbs that the earth bringeth forth, and of all the fishes that the sea or waters of his kingdom breedeth." Such was the dream of wealth which touched the fancy of the Elizabethans. Marlowe, of like temperament to Ralegh's, had dreamed the

same dream, after his own fashion, and had told it in immortal verse—

"Give me the merchants of the Indian mines,
That trade in metal of the purest mould;
The wealthy Moor, that in the Eastern rocks
Without control can pick his riches up,
And in his house heap pearls like pebble-stones,
Receive them free, and sell them by the weight."

What limit was there to the power of such merchants as these? And if Ralegh thought of the power which the master of El Dorado might possess, he thought of much else besides. He knew that to limit the Spaniard's wealth was to ensure the peace of England. "For we find," said he, "that the Spanish King vexeth all the Princes of Europe, and is become in a few years from a poor King of Castile the greatest monarch of this part of the world, and likely every day to increase if other princes forslow the good occasions offered and suffer him to add this empire to the rest." Thus Ralegh believed that his voyage to Guiana would not only enrich England, but check the power of his and England's inveterate enemy, Spain. For once the Queen and Cecil smiled upon his enterprise. The crafty Cecil risked money for the scheme, and the Queen granted Ralegh a commission to attack the Spaniards. Only Lady Ralegh was fearful of her husband's safety. "I hope you will rather draw Sir Walter towards the east than help him towards the sunset, if any respect to me, or love to him, be not forgotten." Alas for Lady Ralegh's peace of mind! The Queen would not restrain a man who was no longer her favourite. Cecil had yielded to the hope of gain, and all was made easy for Sir Walter's experiment in high romance.

At first he was delayed by adverse weather. "This wind breaks my heart," he wrote to Cecil from Sherborne in December 1594. "That should carry me hence now stays me here, and holds seven ships in the river of Thames. As soon as God send them hither I will not lose one hour of time." And he did not. In February he set sail, arrived at Trinidad, made his expedition with five small boats in search of Manoa, the golden city, and though he found it not, brought back an earnest of wealth and an exact knowledge of the country through which he passed. It was a pioneer's voyage, and had it been followed up much of Ralegh's promising might have been fulfilled. Nor was it in vain, even if we measure it by the results attained. Wherever he went Ralegh was seen by the natives in the guise of a liberator. He struck the Spanish fetters from the kindly, ill-treated inhabitants, and won their confidence for England and himself. He lost no chance of gathering the facts which would be useful in the future. He sought out all the aged men and greatest travellers in the country, and questioning them narrowly, he "came to understand the situations,

the rivers, the kingdoms from the East Sea to the borders of Peru, and from Orinoco southward as far as the Amazon or Maragnon." Wherever he went he sang to the natives the praises of England and her Queen, "dilating at large her Majesty's greatness, her justice, her charity to all oppressed nations, with as many of the rest of her beauties and virtues as either he could express or they conceive," until they were ready idolatrously to worship her. And the rest of the things that he saw and did on his voyage, are they not written in 'The Discovery of Guiana,' an admirable discourse which he printed on his return to England?

He came home, content with what he had achieved, and implored Cecil "to move her Majesty that none be suffered to soil the enterprise." He implored in vain. The Kings of the borders, which were by his peril, labour, and charge won to her Majesty, were "by other pilferers lost again." Worse than this, Ralegh's enemies contrived to throw doubt upon the whole enterprise. They spread a rumour about that he had remained hidden in Cornwall, while his friends risked their lives in "the broken islands and drowned lands" of Guiana. They charged him with having "salted" the new discovered country with gold from Barbary. In their envy they hoped that any lies were good enough to besmirch the honest fame of Ralegh, and doubtless were content to see their malice prevent the proper furthering of his scheme. To-day we know that Ralegh's own story went not an inch beyond the truth, that it has been amply confirmed by later travellers. But Ralegh was one upon whose head the tile always fell, and it was decreed that he should sow what others were to reap. *Sic vos non vobis.*

VII.

Hitherto Ralegh had borne without complaint the alternations of fortune, high and low, and now, after a few years more of royal favour, he approached the long fifth act of his life's tragedy. His fall, which came with the accession of James I., was in due accord with the ordered catastrophe of the Elizabethan drama. Ruin came upon him with astonishing swiftness. The new King, poisoned in his mind by Henry Howard, Earl of Northampton, the wickedest man of a wicked age, received Sir Walter Ralegh with coldness, and straightway began to deprive him of his offices. The captaincy of the guard was taken from him; he was bidden instantly to resign the wardenship of the Stannaries and the government of Jersey, though he had established there a land system which survives to-day, and faithful to his own colonial policy had encouraged the trade in fish with Jersey and Newfoundland. Past services weighed not a feather

in the scale against the displeasure of the King. As a worse insult than those that had gone before, he was commanded to leave Durham House, of which he had held possession for nearly twenty years. "I am of opinion," he told Cecil, "that if the King's Majesty had recovered this house, or the like, from the meanest gentleman he had in England, that his Majesty would have given six months time for the avoidance, and I do not know but that the poorest artificer in London hath a quarter's warning given him by his landlord."

Thus Ralegh was treated worse than a poor artificer, and not content with insult, his enemies presently haled him, in their minds an already convicted criminal, before a court of justice. He was charged with attempting "to deprive the King of his crown and dignity; to subvert the government, and alter the true religion established in England; and to levy war against the King." It was idle for him to deny it. His cause was forejudged, his sentence fore-determined. A life spent in fighting Spain with all the weapons which came to his hand was no answer to his accusers, who, through Coke's malignant tongue, charged him with having an English face and a Spanish heart. "Thou hast a Spanish heart," screamed the Attorney-General, "and thyself art a spider of hell." The trial seems remarkable to-day for Coke's clumsy insolence and Ralegh's dignity. Coke used not any other means than reiteration to prove the charges which he brought against Ralegh, who, when his voice was heard above the din of abuse, had no difficulty in getting the better of his antagonist. To put him to shame were impossible, and Coke had the court upon his side. The wiseacres tell us that Ralegh was legally guilty, and I daresay he was. According to the rules of the game, a man was proved guilty by the unsupported evidence of one who claimed him for an accomplice, and who was not asked to confront him. That Ralegh was innocent morally and in truth there can be no doubt whatever. His life speaks for him and his character. Cobham, the sole witness to his dishonour, was a witness of falsehood, and he varied his tale as he would. But if half a dozen witnesses had sworn that Ralegh had conspired with Spain for the destruction of England, they should not have been believed.

However, the rules were not broken. Ralegh was duly condemned to death and duly reprieved. Imprisoned, he fought for his liberty as fiercely as he fought for his life when the scaffold loomed ahead of him. He addressed Cecil and the other Lords in such terms of craven humility as must have been a cruel scourge to his pride. When death still faced him he implored pardon of the King "on the knees of his heart," and yet, in what he thought would have been his last letter to his wife, he proves that he repented him most bitterly of his petitions. "Get those letters (if it be possible),"

he writes, "which I writ to the Lords, wherein I sued for my life, but God knoweth that it was for you and yours that I desired it, but it is true that I disdain myself for begging it. And know it (dear wife) that your son is the child of a true man, who, in his own respect, despiseth death and all his misshapen and ugly forms." Indeed, his son was the son of a true man, who turned even the weary years of his imprisonment to the worthiest account.

And no sooner was Ralegh condemned than an ignoble scramble began for his worldly possessions. Even Sherborne, which he loved best, was taken from him at last, and conferred upon the infamous Carr. "I maun ha' the land, I maun ha' the land," was all that James replied to Lady Ralegh's protest, and Ralegh's noble letter to Carr himself was unregarded. "And for yourself, sir," he wrote, "seeing your day is but now in the dawn, and mine come to the evening —your own virtues and the King's grace assuring you of many good fortunes and much honour—I beseech you not to begin your own buildings upon the ruins of the innocent; and that their griefs and sorrows do not attend your first plantation." Carr in his heyday knew no scruple of compassion. He seized Sherborne, as he seized everything else that he could lay his hand upon. Nor did he remain long in honour to enjoy the stolen property. He was sent to the Tower, a disgraced and fallen man, as Ralegh was leaving it, and he never rose again. But to Ralegh's active mind his prison did but suggest another form of energy. "Sorrow rides the ass," he wrote to Cecil, "prosperity the eagle." If the eagle were denied him, he would do what he could astride the ass. He turned him from a fearless adventurer into a patient, laborious scholar. In the ample leisure of captivity, he studied chemistry, he busied himself with the education of the wisest of Princes, Henry of Wales, whose early death alone prevented Ralegh's enlargement, and he wrote his 'History of the World.'

A biographer of Ralegh has said that it is easier to praise 'The History of the World' than to read it. It is impossible to turn over its pages without praising it. Whatever faults modern criticism may find with it, it remains an unexampled monument of English prose. The author can be grave or familiar as he chooses. On one page he calls Agathocles an "eloquent knave," and "claps" a crown upon his head, on another he discourses of fate and death and life with a lofty seriousness. His style is apt equally for reflection and narrative. In the vast scope of his work he covers centuries with something of Gibbon's mastery; and all the while he illustrates the far-off past with modern instances. He weaves his own experience, his own practical knowledge, into the texture of his ancient history. When he compares the Roman and Macedonian, he turns his eyes willingly upon the valour of the English soldiers, levied

in haste from "following the cart, or sitting in the shop-stall." And in his final invocation to Death, his constant theme—"O eloquent, just, and mighty Death! whom none could advise, thou hast persuaded"—he writes a prose which Donne could not surpass, and which may well have been a model to Sir Thomas Browne himself.

That James I. should have pounced upon the book and been minded to suppress it is not strange. For not only did Ralegh in his preface sketch Henry VIII. in the colours of truth, but he preached always to this text: "God is the sorest and sharpest schoolmaster that can be devised for such kings as think this world ordained for them without curtailment to turn it upside down at their pleasure." Ralegh, enclosed within the Tower, thought himself free to express such thoughts as were in him, and he recked not of the King's disapproval. And all the while he was dreaming of Guiana and its gold. Even 'The History of the World' was but an interlude in the constancy of his purpose. At last he moved the obduracy of the King, and in 1616 was liberated from the Tower to prepare for the last voyage, in which he risked all that was left of fortune to him and his wife. The voyage failed miserably. How could it succeed when its leader travelled with a halter about his neck? Scurvy and foul winds prepared for disaster. Mutiny ensured it. His ships were filled with the world's scum, and his disheartened followers refused to go on when triumph seemed within their reach. There is little doubt that the King increased his danger by warning the Spaniards of his coming. His son was killed, and Keymys, his friend, put an end to his own life. So Ralegh came back with no hope, and the certainty in his heart of a shameful death. He was beheaded three hundred years ago in Old Palace Yard, and he matched his heroic life with an heroic death. "He was the most fearless of death that ever was known," said the Dean of Westminster, who was with him at the scaffold, "and the most resolute and confident, yet with reverence and conscience." When he touched the edge of the axe with his finger, "This gives me no fear," said he; "it is a sharp and fair medicine to cure me of all my diseases." And the man in the crowd who cried as the head was shown to the people, "We have not such another head to be cut off," spoke with the voice of all his countrymen.

Thus died, three centuries ago, a great Englishman who, having many aims, fell not short of attaining them all—a true Elizabethan, faithful with an equal mind to words and deeds. His death, noble for himself, was infamous only for them who compassed it; and Ralegh, the hero, is still remembered with honour when the names of his murderers are but blots upon soiled parchment.

CHARLES WHIBLEY.

MUSINGS WITHOUT METHOD.

THE WAR AND THE CENSORSHIP—THE PRACTICAL ELOQUENCE OF ADMIRAL SIMS—THE FREEDOM OF THE SEAS—"EYES TO WEEP WITH"—PRESIDENT WILSON AND PEACE—THE HOHENZOLLERNS AND THE GERMAN PEOPLE—MR BALFOUR ON THE HUNS—"A NATION IN ARMS OR A MILITIA"—VISCOUNT GREY AND HIS LEAGUE.

WHEN the War began we took the very proper precaution of establishing a censorship. In a struggle, upon whose issue depended the future of Europe and the world, we could not imitate the follies of which we had been guilty in the Crimea and elsewhere, and set the distribution of news above our national security. Rightly enough we followed the example of Japan, and rigorously controlled our correspondents at the Front. The Censors of the Press have done their work only too well. They have erred always on the side of thoroughness. From the picture of the war which they have compelled us to present, the prowess of England has been too often omitted. Those things which every German knows have been concealed from our eyes. The very names of our generals and our regiments have been suppressed, and the natural result is that half the world still believes that England has been not much more than a sympathetic observer of the conflict. This fiction was more easily sent flying through the mouths of men, because the English are not skilled in the art of blowing their own trumpet. They have done their duty without fuss and without bluster. Their habit of secrecy has been encouraged by the Censors, and the amiable suggestion that the English would fight to the last Frenchman or Scot or Welshman, or Canadian or Australian or New Zealander, was industriously employed to serve the malicious purpose of Germany.

And now by all means in our power we are trying to overtake our own deception. We are spending thousands (even millions) in such propaganda as shall prove the falsehood of the picture which, under the auspices of the censorship, we have drawn of ourselves. What our own mistaken reticence has cost us we may presently be able to estimate, and also how much the Press Censorship, an absolute necessity in time of war, has cost us by its mistaken policy of concealment. Meanwhile, if an air of mystery has enveloped our Army, what shall we say of the dark impenetrable fog in which our Navy has done its work? The spirited attack made upon Ostend and Zeebrugge, in accord with the ancient tradition of our fighting ships, reminded us how much we still owed to the invincible sea-power of Britain. But the Fleet once more hid itself behind the curtain of impenetrability, and the work of Great Britain was once more underrated.

We welcome, therefore, with all the greater warmth the generous speech made some weeks since by Admiral Sims to the journalists of his own country. Admiral Sims spoke as a sailor, without flourish or rhetorical gesture, and he told America in the plainest terms precisely what our Navy has done and is doing in the War. The debt of gratitude which we owe to him is wholly independent of our self-love. It is but common justice which demands a disclosure of our deeds, and after Admiral Sims' straightforward words there is no room for doubt or shame. "There had been an idea," said he, "in the American mind that the American Navy had been doing the bulk of the work over here—at least a half. That is not correct." He pointed out that of the 5000 anti-submarine craft at work, day and night, only 160 were American, or 3 per cent. Again, he combated the statement, sometimes made in the American Press, that the Americans, by a miracle of their Navy, had got a million and a half troops here in a few months, and had protected them by the way. "We didn't do that," said Admiral Sims. "Great Britain did. She brought over two-thirds of them, and escorted a half. We escort only one-third of the merchant vessels that come over."

And how is Great Britain able to achieve these wonders on the sea? "The reason they can do this"—again it is Admiral Sims who speaks—"is because up in the North Sea somewhere is lying the great British Grand Fleet. They can do this work because the British Grand Fleet is so powerful that the German High Seas Fleet has to stay at home. If a catastrophe should happen to the British Grand Fleet, there is no power on earth that can save us, for then the German High Seas Fleet can come out and sweep the seas. The British Grand Fleet is the foundation-stone of the cause of the whole of the Allies." That is perfectly true. Had it not been for the British Fleet, the Germans would long ago have been masters of the world. And the moral of Admiral Sims' direct and honest speech is this: there must be no more discussion of the thing that is called "the freedom of the seas." Neither now nor at a peace conference must we abate one jot of our supremacy. We fought the Declaration of London with success before the war, and we must not surrender the advantage which then we gained. Upon the mastery of the sea depend the prosperity and the freedom of Great Britain. We have not fought for more than four years merely to decline upon an act of suicide.

Against the freedom of the seas we fought Napoleon for some twenty years. Many times peace was ours for the asking, had we only acknowledged "the equality of all flags on the sea." This we could not do then, and cannot do now, without endangering our very existence. Germany's desire to

free the seas is easily intelligible. She is a Continental power, which even in war-time can communicate freely with such of her neighbours as are not hostile to her. If she choose she can exchange commodities with Russia or Austria, and there is none to hinder her. At the same time she can prevent, without trouble, our access to these countries. And we hear no vague talk about the freedom of the land. We, on the other hand, depend for our approach to all and sundry upon the sea. That is our element, and if we lose control of it our life is at an end. Germany does not permit us to travel across her borders when we are at war, in search of such commodities as we need to make our guns and to fill our shells. And we, in our turn, relying upon our Fleet, forbid the Germans to replenish their empty stores from the granaries and factories oversea. In peace-time the ocean has hitherto been free and open to all, and it will be free and open again to the Germans when after a long boycott they have paid their offences against sea law. And it has been free and open because the English have freed it from piracy and have kept it decently and honestly policed. If to-day we surrendered the supremacy which we have won by the heroism of Hawke and Jervis and Nelson, we should either sink into a second-rate power or we should be forced to begin the next war by tearing up a scrap of paper. We intend to do neither of these things, and if, in Admiral Sims' words, "the British Grand Fleet is the foundation-stone of the cause of the whole of the Allies," we know that those Allies would not, if they could, at the request of a beaten Germany, disturb us in the possession of a power which has saved the civilised world from slavery.

Meanwhile the Allied Armies and the Allied Fleets are accomplishing the work of emancipation. The Germans are retreating everywhere before the hammer blows of Marshal Foch and the united Armies under his command. The friends of Germany are ready to make the best terms they can to escape from a battlefield on which defeat is certain. We are faced by one simple duty: to fight the Germans until they surrender unconditionally. We want no discussion with them, no interchanges of views, no bargaining of this advantage against that. All the advantages are ours, and at the proper time we shall make the best use of them we can. We cannot parley with the Germans, because we are unable to believe in their good faith. There is no reason why we should show them the slightest tenderness, because they have proved themselves savages, unrestrained by the laws of war or decency. As they are driven back we discover day by day fresh atrocities which they have committed. The horrible crimes of which they have been guilty cannot be punished by conversations. The only peace which is possible is a dictated peace. The only terms to which the Allies can agree will be the terms of

justice, untempered by mercy. A victorious Germany, as she herself has said, would have left us only our eyes to weep with. We know what she would have meted out to others, and with what measure they meted let it be measured to them again.

Stricken in the field, the Germans fall back upon a species of cunning which will deceive nobody. Believing with some reason that idealism flourishes more luxuriantly at a distance of three thousand miles than in devastated and enslaved France, the Germans go whining for peace to President Wilson. Thus they hoped, if they miss peace, at least to divide America from the Allies. A vain hope, which has been speedily disappointed. Indeed, it seems to us that far too much importance was attached to what was no more than an exchange of personal views. President Wilson spoke for himself alone; he met with half-hearted support in his own country, and he finally convinced the most sanguine of the Germans that they could expect little support from him. But the mere fact that he spoke for himself alone suggests that the sooner the Allies establish a united committee, whose duty it shall be to agree upon terms of peace, the better will it be for our security in the future, our serenity in the present time. We have fought side by side; side by side, therefore, we must dictate terms to the Boche, and decide what punishments are adequate for the manifold crimes that he has committed.

The reception in America of the President's answer to the German request for an armistice, and of Prince Max of Baden's rejoinder, is the best proof that Germany's trick failed completely. Mr Taft perceived at once the Boche's insincerity, and also "the very general" character of the President's fourteen points, which alone would keep a conference busy for months. Nor did Senator Lodge harbour any illusions. "Mr M'Adoo and some of the Press," said he, "speak of the German Note, if authentic, as a complete surrender. It is nothing of the kind. It is not surrender, and it is highly conditional. If we accept the Note, it means that Germany has failed to conquer the world at this moment, and that we have lost the war." But it is Mr Roosevelt who spoke with the voice which will be most warmly welcomed in Europe. "I greatly regret," said he, "that the President has entered into these negotiations, and I trust they will be stopped. We have announced that we will not submit to a negotiated peace, and under such conditions to begin negotiations is bad faith with ourselves and our Allies."

We are continually being told that we cannot make peace with the Hohenzollerns, and that we have no quarrel with the German people. Both these statements are meaningless, and the sooner we cease to repeat them parrot-wise the better equipped shall we be for the drawing up efficiently of the terms which we mean to impose. As we are resolved upon a dictated peace,

it does not matter very much to whom we dictate it. And while we have every right to insist upon the heaviest penalties, while we have every right to insure ourselves against another attack upon the liberties of the world, not even conquest permits us to say how and by whom Germany shall be governed in the future. The Germans, after the war, will govern themselves as seems to them best. They will be unable to heap up fresh armaments, because the indemnities which they will be forced to pay will give them neither leisure nor a balance at their banks. But if they do not think that human wisdom and human salvation depend upon the erection of neat little ballot-boxes in the streets of Berlin, let them be free to reject an artifice which has boded small good to those who have boasted about it.

The other statement that we have no quarrel with the German people is obviously absurd. With whom, then, have we a quarrel? "Brutes they were," said Mr Balfour, "when they began the war, and, as far as we can judge, brutes they remain at the present moment." The whole people has shared, without a protest, what it believed to be the triumph of its rulers. It must share, without extenuation, the sentence which shall be pronounced against them all. If the people had objected in the hour of victory to its rulers' brutalities, it could have made its objections heard. Herr Harden, whom we may accept as an echo of the popular voice, has held every possible opinion during the war, and he was very careful, until he saw the approach of disaster, not to say a single word in dispraise of the German military leaders. He boasted that it was "our war," that "we willed it," and when he protests, as he protests to-day, that the German people shall not do penance for the crimes of a few, he talks nonsense. In brief, the truth could not have been more clearly stated than it has been stated by Mr Balfour. "I wish I could think that these atrocious crimes," said he, "were the issues of a small, dominant, military class, . . . but it is incredible that crimes like these, perpetrated in the light of day, known to all mankind, condemned from one end of the civilised world to the other, should go on being repeated month after month of four years of embittered warfare, if they did not commend themselves to the population which commits them."

If any one is so simple as to believe that Germany is chastened, let him read General Baron von Freytag-Loringhoven's new treatise, entitled 'A Nation in Arms or a Militia?' Here there is no disguise, no pretence that a League of Free Nations will abolish war. General von Freytag is already looking towards the next conflict, and doing his best to solve the problem of ultimate victory. He is a realist who places facts above sentiments, and he does his best to discover by what means his country can best be strengthened for the future

His book is a piece of close argument, and withal a vivid summary of military history. He begins, in true German fashion, by citing Heraclitus's definition of war as the begetter of all things. "It cannot be otherwise," says he. "Such a World-War as the present, quite apart from its other effects, must produce a very marked quickening of the intellectual qualities." There is here no condemnation of "militarism." So he praises the unremitting industry of the German army, in which, he says, the wish expressed by Treitschke that the defeat of 1806 should be "ineffaceable from the memory of all future generations as a personal injury, an admonition upon all to vigilance, humility, and loyalty," found its fulfilment. Such was the temper of the German army in 1914. Such will it be after this war is over, save that it will add to its memory of 1806 the memory of 1918, unless we do what Napoleon against his better judgment refrained from doing —put Germany in such a position of inferiority that the memory will be too bitter to inspire the hope of vengeance.

General von Freytag, at any rate, has made up his mind that after the war Germany must, and shall, be "a nation trained in arms." He proves by a large array of instances the failure of a militia. We do not know whether the final defeat of his own country by hastily raised levies will persuade him to change his opinion. But when he composed his discourse, his mind was made up. He admits that the world-embracing theories of 1815 did not constitute any immediate danger. "Europe had just struck to earth," he writes, "by her united forces, the tyrant who had kept her in thraldom. It was permissible then to dally with thoughts of a militia. At the present day, in view of Germany's central position and of the mighty world-political interests which she has at stake, it is not permissible. Only too clearly has it been revealed that our safety in the future can be guaranteed only by a firmly knit, trained national army, not by a loose militia." General von Freytag, being a German, is deficient in humour, or he would not talk of "tyrants" or "thraldoms." But the intention which he has for the future is plain. If he can, he will convert Germany once again into a vast nation in arms. And if his countrymen pretend to enter into a league of nations, we may be sure that they will do what Scharnhorst did in 1806 — employ once more the Krümper system, should the nation in arms be denied them, and burst upon a pacific world with a highly-trained, well-equipped army.

It is plain, therefore, that if we are to check the military ambition of Germany, something more solid than a League of Nations will be necessary. We hear much of this League. A better stimulus to illusory eloquence has not been found for many a year. The League of Nations is not a policy, it is a superstition; and, like other

superstitions, it has little meaning, and should have no influence at all upon our agreements of peace. It is a thing which we are not permitted to argue about. We must accept it as it is given to us, and "no questions asked." But not one of its champions has yet tried to explain how the laws passed by the League of Nations are to be enforced. Many speeches have been made by Viscount Grey of Fallodon and others, and they amount precisely to nothing. We hear a vast deal about "an economic boycott," and we know that if Viscount Grey of Fallodon has his way, there will be Free Trade all round. Again, we are told that after the war there will be disarmament, and Viscount Grey, with his sanguine temper, suggests that Germany will be the first power asked to disarm. But, we ask in honest simplicity, how shall you compel Germany to disarm? When Prussia lay at the feet of Napoleon, he insisted that Prussia should disarm. And Prussia took his warning so nearly to heart, that she pretended to disarm in 1806, and, as we have said, in 1813 had an army large enough to win the battle of Leipzig. The Allies are not so strong and are not so vigilant as Napoleon. How, therefore, shall they keep an efficient check upon the growing forces of Germany?

A greater contrast to General von Freytag could not be found than Viscount Grey. The German is a stern realist; the Englishman is a tepid idealist. And the Englishman's idealism is the greatest danger which confronts us to-day. The Germans, completely defeated, are like the drowning man who will catch hold of any plank that presents itself. They want raw materials, and they will join any league which will provide them with what they want. They will take all they can, and will give nothing. And our sentimentalists will welcome them, like erring brothers, to a warm embrace. Viscount Grey's strongest argument is, of course, his very proper hatred of war. He thinks that the suffering caused by the present war, and an understanding of the horrors which may overtake us in the future, will convince the world that a repetition of it must be avoided at all costs. So far, we are in complete agreement with Viscount Grey. We must avoid a repetition of the war, and we can avoid it best by keeping intact our present alliances and by resolving that never again shall we fall behind the Germans in our armaments. The policy is clear, and may easily be carried out. But it does not satisfy Viscount Grey. Before a practical method of defence he prefers the foolish dream of a league, which will never become a useful reality, and which will prove, in the hands of foolish politicians, a mere instrument of tyranny. As Viscount Grey calls his league a league of free nations, we may take it for granted that he wishes to impose what is known as "democracy" upon the whole world. Even if the democratic principle were generally acknowledged as a

thing beyond dispute, even if we all believed that the ballot-box was the beginning and the end of wisdom, Viscount Grey's pretension would be absurd. There may lurk somewhere in Europe a nation which does not desire to be wise or free. And what right has Viscount Grey or another to inflict wisdom or freedom upon those who do not desire it?

However, Viscount Grey is convinced that there must be no more wars, and he thinks that this conviction will supply "the motive-power which will make the League of Nations work." Again we are unable to agree with him. The League of Nations will "work" by force of arms. To enforce peace we must condemn ourselves to be perpetually at war. We must guard all the frontiers and keep a watchful eye upon all countries. And about this huge army, which would be the first necessity of our League, Viscount Grey says little or nothing. A single paragraph seems to him enough to explain the duties and purposes of the international police. "Supposing the League once formed," he said, "the treaty signed, the treaty binding the nations composing the League to settle any disputes that may arise between them by some method other than that of war, and each of them undertaking an obligation that if any nation does break the covenant, they will use all the forces at their disposal against that nation which has so broken it." The grammar is uncertain, and the meaning is not very clear. Viscount Grey does not explain how the avenging nations shall use the forces at their disposal or how they shall invade the recalcitrant country. That country will assuredly take good care to arm itself before it breaks the covenant, and may have as good a chance as Germany thought she had in 1914 of dominating the world. How, then, should we be in a better position to make an end of war with a League of Nations than without it?

But Viscount Grey would not limit the duties of his international force to punishing unruly countries. He aspires to be the policeman of the nations, and to turn his dark lantern upon all those who dare to infringe the laws of democracy. "I do not see," says he, "why the League of Nations, once formed, should necessarily be idle." Indeed, it would never be idle. "I do not see why it should not arrange for an authority, and an international force at its disposal, which should act as police act in individual countries." What a terrible prospect! Instead of making an end of all wars we should see to it that peace was never signed, and should ensure for this unhappy world a perpetual state of war. And the League of Nations will not only keep the peace—it will arrange also the domestic policies of the nations. Viscount Grey agrees with President Wilson that each nation belonging to the League should settle its own fiscal policy, which is truly a vast concession. But, and here is a vast exception, "having settled it, it must apply it to all the members of the League without

discrimination." If these words mean anything, they mean that England, having chosen Free Trade, must not make bargains with any of her friends. Germany and France must have equal privileges and equal advantages. If we permit our French friends to send over their commodities duty-free, we must give the same permission to our German enemies. Which is absurd. And that is not the worst: we must sacrifice all that we have of patriotism and national character; we must become frankly international, without hope and without pride. And if we dare to assert ourselves, to boast that we are compatriots with Shakespeare and Milton, Germany, as leader of the League, will land an army at Dover, and march upon London, the more effectively to chasten our arrogance.

However, the League of Nations will probably remain a pious aspiration. When peace is signed the Allies will feel so strong a confidence in themselves that they will not ask for mischievous safeguards. They will place Germany in such a state that she will not be able to make war, even if she wishes it. And for themselves, they have had enough of fighting. They fought to save civilisation, and they have saved it. What more is there for them to do? They must be strong enough to keep the wild beasts of Europe properly caged, and stern enough to prevent those wild beasts coming back from their cage to parley with respectable citizens. But to achieve this no League is necessary. We have but to guard our own alliances, and to take care that Germany does not arm herself again for a hundred years. The whole problem can be solved by exacting large indemnities. We are constantly told that it is useless to exact them, because Germany cannot pay them. Was ever a more foolish argument advanced? Of course Germany cannot pay all that will be demanded of her on the nail. But she can pay the interest on her debt, and she can create a sinking fund. Only a year before this war broke out, certain towns in Germany paid the last instalment that was owing of the sums demanded by Napoleon a hundred years ago. If in the year 2018 the Germans have not yet paid off their capital debt to France and Belgium and England, we need not complain. We shall have taken care that the interest is duly paid.

There is another reason, besides the inherent folly of the League of Nations, why we deplore Viscount Grey's sudden interposition in affairs. He is a discredited politician, and if we are ever again to enjoy the benefits of sound government, we must punish our politicians for their misdeeds. As it stands at present, politics is the only trade which pays no penalty for failure. The Radicals, who by refusing to place the country in a proper state of defence made war certain, are showing a feverish desire to call attention to themselves. An election is imminent, and they must perforce advertise themselves and their

merits to their constituents. They are all of them busy making speeches. Lord Haldane cannot keep silence. Mr Asquith has delivered him of a noble set of eloquent platitudes. And now Viscount Grey has attempted to explain what he means by a League of Nations. The explanation is not remarkable; it is remarkable that it should have been made at all; and we can only advise our readers to turn to the revelations of Prince Lichnowsky, and ask themselves whether the politician who surrendered so many British interests to the Germans is entitled to a hearing on any subject even remotely connected with foreign affairs.

We regret to record the death of Mr Clifton Collins, an old and faithful contributor to 'Blackwood's Magazine.' He wrote on many subjects, and always with distinction. He discoursed of the Pytchley Country and of Cookery, of the Cambridge Apostles and Holland House; and in whatever he wrote he displayed a profound knowledge of history and a keen sense of style. A sound scholar, he devoted himself to the study of Greek; and we have it, on the authority of one of the most erudite men of our generation, that Clifton Collins had no rival in the exposition of Plato. And yet it is for what he was rather than for what he wrote that we shall always treasure his memory. A man whose zest for life was always keen, he was cut off from the sights and sounds which should have been his enduring pleasure. So deaf was he that his friends could converse with him only on paper. And yet his courage never faltered; he never yielded to depression. Hampered as he was, he was always of a stout and cheerful heart. Suffering from such afflictions as would have overwhelmed the most of men, he preserved unto the end a praiseworthy aspect of pride, even of arrogance. As we look back upon him, and recall the many hours we have spent with him in vigorous talk, we forget that the sense of hearing was denied him, and remember only his quick argument and eloquent discourse. Educated at Oxford, he chose Cambridge in his riper years, and was a loyal friend to the University, which he had adopted as his own. So scrupulous was he in preserving his anonymity, that he refrained from signing his excellent articles, and left no other proof of his scholarship behind him than two little books on Plato and Sophocles. It is, therefore, all the more our genuine pleasure and our bounden duty to record in the 'Magazine,' in which he always professed the liveliest interest, our respect for his learning, and our admiration of his character.

Printed by William Blackwood and Sons.

BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE.

No. MCCXXXVIII. DECEMBER 1918. Vol. CCIV.

FOR WOMEN.

BY A WOMAN.

No—we women, and especially we mothers, are determined that this shall not happen again. We surely have the power to prevent it, and we must find out how to use it. It would be the grossest treachery on the part of men of the civilised world towards women if they permitted any repetition of what has happened in the last four years.

We know what we have paid, and we are determined this shall be settled once for all and the world made safe. But who among men are strong enough, far-seeing enough, and courageous enough to resolve on measures which shall protect the world in the future?

Is it to President Wilson that we must appeal? Is he the Ruler who, made supreme in power by the great unselfish nation behind him, can dictate the terms of peace, and also dictate what treatment a criminal Germany shall receive after the war, in order that she may cease for ever to be a menace to the world? Our own statesmen and those of other nations watched Germany preparing, untiringly and unceasingly, for some great attack, yet they took little notice, and any one who tried to rouse them to the danger that was coming was jeered at as a scaremonger. If Germany should succeed in bamboozling British statesmen again concerning her intentions, our fearful sacrifices will have been made in vain.

Mr Hughes warns us that we are as little prepared for peace as we were for war, and implores us to cut off the tentacles of the German octopus that was strangling us before the war, but our rulers are slow to take his advice. German interests seem strangely protected; and those who, like

the mothers, have given their all, tremble lest we should again be cajoled and deluded into trading with these criminals as we did in former years.

Of the suffering of the mothers, who can speak!

Of the millions of men who have died, many have been young—so very young—nineteen, twenty, and twenty-one years of age. Who can measure the tireless patience and love, the self-sacrifice, the devotion of mothers to their young sons? Who can measure the anguish of those mothers at seeing them cut off before they come to man's estate, to gratify the ambition of a homicidal maniac such as the German Emperor has proved himself to be, holding in one hand the mask of Peace before his face, and in the other, behind his back, his bag of poison-gas?

Who will protect the mothers from any repetition of these hideous sufferings? They have not complained. They weep in silence, and their sorrow is hidden from the world. They do not grudge their sons. They believe they have died to save their country, but they have a right to ask that these young lives shall not have been sacrificed in vain.

If the Free Trade policy which was pursued by us with Germany before the war—namely, letting their manufactured goods come in free to this country while they taxed the things we sent to them—is continued, will they not quickly build up again their prosperity and again prepare to dominate the world? Bismarck used to say, "British Free Trade is good, very good—for Germany," and we have been constantly told that it was upon that Free Trade that the German Empire became strong and powerful.

Now we have a Committee appointed to inquire into Trade After The War. This Committee is presided over by Lord Balfour of Burleigh, and has upon its list many business men. In the report which they have issued, we read the following words:—

"We now proceed to discuss the policy which should be adopted as regards the participation of aliens in commercial and industrial occupations in this country. In our opinion it would not be desirable that any special restrictions should be imposed on aliens generally in this connexion. We are satisfied that the absence of such restrictions in the past has on the whole been to the advantage of this country, especially as regards the freedom of investment of capital."[1]

If the investment of capital is to be the only interest considered, then indeed the women of this country will be betrayed. We did not know before the war the character of the German people, but we know it now, and we cannot believe that it will be safe to return to pre-war days, to trade with them and to admit them to this country. They have been

[1] Chapter VI., Article 146.

condemned out of the mouth of one of their own countrymen—Dr Muehlon, a Director of Krupp's great armament works, before whom their plans, their policy, and their lives were laid bare in all their brutality.

Unfortunately, millions of our people have no time to read the evidence of the unspeakable crimes committed by the Germans in the countries they have invaded. If people are working ten hours a day in a munition factory, they cannot be expected to read up the newspapers and to pick out, from the mass of matter with which the newspapers are filled, the few items which are of real importance.

How many people have read the Report of the Committee appointed by the British Government to inquire into the German outrages, principally in Belgium? Probably very few. And dreadful as these reports are, we are told that much was omitted *because it was unprintable.* Is it not well that women should know what was done by the Germans when they did get control of a civilian population, as in Belgium and Northern France?

We must remember that the German army is a civilian army. The whole manhood of the country passes through the army, and remains in it for one, two, or three years, according to circumstances. They then return to ordinary life, and come over to this country as waiters, hotel-keepers, commercial travellers, clerks, and all the numberless occupations which they have followed in former years.

If the following cases are considered to be printable, what can those have been which the Committee considered to be unprintable? Ought not all the women of this country to have been made fully aware of what was done in Belgium? We were told over and over again by Generals in authority that an invasion was quite possible and almost probable, and, indeed, there can be no doubt that the Germans counted on being able to invade this country as a certainty. Is it not well, therefore, that the women of this country should have been prepared for what they might expect from the hands of these people? and knowing these things, will they consent to allow these people to swarm over to this country when Peace is declared, because it may be to the advantage of the investment of capital?

No evidence was taken that the Commission did not consider absolutely reliable.

"At Haicht several children had been murdered. One, of two or three years old, was found nailed to the door of a farmhouse by its hands and feet, a crime which seems almost incredible, but the evidence for which the Committee felt bound to accept."

In the following case the witness stated that he went to a farmhouse in Belgium:

"The Germans knocked at the door of the kitchen, and the farmer, the two men, the girl, and myself, all rushed out of the kitchen into

another room and hid ourselves there in the dark. The farmer's wife, who had a baby in her arms, which she was suckling, was not quick enough to get away, and she had not escaped with us. There was a small window, which looked into the kitchen, from the room into which these people got. The witness continues: I looked into the kitchen. I saw the Germans seize the baby out of the arms of the farmer's wife. There were three German soldiers—one officer and two privates. The two privates held the baby, and the officer took out his sword and cut the baby's head off. The head fell on to the floor, and the soldiers kicked the body of the child into a corner and kicked the head after it. After the baby had been killed we saw the officer say something to the farmer's wife, and we saw her push him off. After five or six minutes the two soldiers seized the woman and put her on the ground. She resisted them, and they then pulled all the clothes off her until she was quite naked. The officer then violated her, while one soldier held her by the shoulders and the other by the arms. After the officer, each soldier in turn violated her, the other soldier and the officer holding her down. After the woman had been violated by the three, the officer cut off the woman's breasts. I then saw him take out his revolver and point it at the woman on the ground. The witness says that he knew nothing more, as they then ran into the field, and from there saw the farmhouse had been set on fire. The soldiers were cavalry, because they had spurs on."

Another witness stated:

"We were passing the Flying Ground outside Liége when I saw a woman, apparently of middle age—perhaps twenty-eight to thirty years old—stark naked, tied to a tree. At her feet were two little children about three or four years old. All three were dead. I believe the woman had one of her breasts cut off, but I cannot be sure of this. Her whole bosom was covered with blood and black marks. Both children had been killed by what appeared to be bayonet wounds.

"I saw the dead body of a child about two years of age. A German lance, similar to those used by the Uhlans and other German cavalry, was in the child's body, and was stuck into the ground through the body. The wound was still bleeding.

"A young child—a boy of about three or four years—lay partly in a manger and partly over it, in a stable. His two hands and feet were cut off."

Another witness stated:

"On opening the back door of a farmhouse I saw four Germans climbing over a wall and trying to escape. Three got away, but the fourth I shot down. Lying on the ground I found four children—three little girls and a boy. Each had their hands cut off. They were dying, but not quite dead, their hands still hanging to their arms by the skin. There was blood all round on the ground. There was no one with the children, either in the yard or in the house."

Still another witness stated:

"The Germans were retiring and we were pressing on them. We entered about midday. A young girl about seventeen came up to me crying in the village. She was dressed only in a chemise. She told me that seventeen girls, including herself, had been dragged into a field, stripped quite naked, and violated, and that twelve of them had been killed by being ripped up across the stomach with a bayonet. In the same village, on the same day, I saw a man in a barn dead. The corpse was burnt, and his legs cut off. The village people told us that his legs had been cut off, and that he had been thrown alive into the fire."

In another locality a witness testified to a number of men being brought out of houses and shot.

"Altogether thirty-two were killed—all men. I counted the bodies afterwards. After the shooting, seven or eight were finished off with the bayonet. Immediately after the

men had been killed I saw the Germans going into the houses in the Place and bringing out the women and girls—about twenty were brought out. They were marched close to the corpses. Each of them was held by the arms. They tried to get away. They were made to lie on tables which had been brought into the Square. About fifteen of them were then violated. Each of them was violated by about twelve soldiers. While this was going on, about seventy Germans were standing round the women (including five officers—young). The officers started it. The ravaging went on for about an hour and a half. Many of the women fainted and showed no sign of life. While this was going on, other Germans were burning the houses in the Square."

Another witness stated:

"At the entrance of a village we were close to a farm. The farmhouse was on fire. The body of the farmer—an old man—was lying there; the head, severed from the body, was lying at some distance off. Two sons, aged about thirty-five to forty, were lying dead also, from gunshot wounds. The wife of one had her whole left breast cut away, and was covered with blood, but was still alive, leaning against the wall on some straw. She told us that the German Uhlans, six of them, had gone into the house, and one of them said: 'You have some Belgian soldiers hidden here,' and she naturally replied: 'No, there are none.' Instantly he struck her, cutting off the whole of her left breast. She did not say it was the blow of a sword, but I think it was. She spoke Flemish, which I understood a little. She was very faint, having lost much blood, which was still flowing. She also said that they had sent up her little son of some eight years old to look in the loft to see if there were any Belgian soldiers hidden in the straw. They then pulled away the ladder and set the house on fire. It was about twenty-two to twenty-five feet from the door or window of the loft to the ground, and too high for him to jump down, and he must have been burned to death in the straw which was there."

Again, another witness stated:

"I saw two little children—girls three or four years old—standing beside the road with a woman, who appeared to be their mother. As the Germans came up, two of them drove their bayonets through the bodies of these two children, killing them. Close beside the road there was a small farm homestead burning, and the bodies of the two children were pitched into the flames by the soldiers who killed them. They tossed them in with their bayonets."

Another witness, an electrical engineer by profession, stated:

"He was in a village south of Malines. He saw the corpse of a man and a woman. We inquired of the neighbours, and they told us that the woman was enciente. She had been violated by German soldiers, and had had her womb cut open by them in her husband's presence. He had been previously bound to the banisters. They had removed the unborn child. We saw the latter, half-burnt. The flesh was grilled more than burnt. They had beheaded the husband. We saw the place where they had beheaded him covered with blood. They took the man's head and thrust it into the woman's womb, after tearing out the child. We saw the two corpses in this state after it had been done. I asked the neighbours if any of the soldiers who had done it had been drunk, and they said they had not. I do not think it could have happened more than an hour. The woman was completely naked. The man was fully clothed. They were people of middle class, apparently about thirty-five years old. The neighbours told us it would have been their first child. They said the Germans had done it out of sheer villainy, and had not suggested that they had been fired on by civilians."

In another village the same witness found several houses where there was blood on the floor, and in one house found

a young girl of about fourteen years.

"She was half-mad when we found her. Her mother was there, and told us that seven German Red Cross men had violated her, one after the other. It had been done quite recently, just before the Germans had been driven out."

An American lady, working with the Red Cross in France, writes:

"Among the one thousand (girls) for whom it is our duty to care, there are more than nine hundred, all under fifteen years of age, who are mothers, or who are on the eve of becoming mothers. And all—yes, all—are infected with syphilis. About four hundred girls, at the highest estimate ten years old, have been violated by the Boche, and there is not one among them who has not been infected in this awful manner."

These are but a small proportion of those who have been carried off. It is estimated that eighteen thousand of these women slaves were taken from two towns alone.

Are the women of this country and of America to sit secure by their inviolate hearths and see the torturers and violators of thousands of other far away unknown women received in their countries as they were before the war? No, they *shall*, they *must* be punished; and as it is abundantly clear that the whole nation has been systematically corrupted by their leaders, and that they were out for plunder of the whole world, so the whole nation must suffer; and if men are so craven that they think more of the investment of capital than they do of the protection of women from such crimes, then women must help themselves, and must appeal to both men and women of the American nation not to enter into relationship with the German nation until the German people have rid themselves of the monsters who rule them, and have repented of and expiated their crimes.

It may be said that these reports are unfit for any one to read. Who dare say this when these things have happened to our martyred sisters, and might have happened any day that an invasion had taken place to British women and children? And the "unprintable" things, what of them? Every woman in the country ought to have been made acquainted with the reports relating to these crimes. Only by the mercy of God has this country been saved from the horrors that have fallen upon France, Belgium, Serbia, Russia, and Italy.

Hardly a day passes that some fresh diabolical outrage is not launched upon the world. The torpedoing of the *Lusitania* and the sweeping away of eleven hundred persons, of whom forty were babies, was only the beginning of the murders upon the sea. That horror caused the Italians to rush through the streets crying "Out with the barbarians." Over and over again has that tragedy been repeated and under more frightful circumstances—hospital ships laden with defenceless wounded men and nurses, and the sinking of numberless ships of which no trace will ever be found. No book could be large enough to detail the crimes committed by

these people—the murders of Nurse Cavell and of Captain Fryatt; but it is useless to labour the subject. Wherever these people have gone they have behaved like devils, and like devils they are able to put on the cloak of deception and to pose as kindly, efficient, and harmless people when they come to this country seeking to ingratiate themselves and to penetrate into every fibre of the nation.

The men who propose to admit Germans to this country without restriction after the war must be told that such a policy will not be endured. It is no matter of emotion, but one of common-sense. We must refuse to associate or to allow our people to associate with a nation that has shown itself rotten with moral leprosy.

Among the unspeakable crimes committed by the Germans, nothing perhaps, if the whole truth were known, is more appalling than the treatment of British prisoners of war. The shameful brutalities practised on wounded and defenceless captives should be more widely known in this country. The authorities here have considered it advisable to keep these sufferings from the knowledge of the public as far as possible. Sometimes a corner of the veil has been lifted, as in the case of Wittenberg, with most excellent results in stimulating recruiting. But why have not these sufferings been made public all along? Would they not have roused the nation to greater efforts, and have had the effect of preventing strikes, which are largely the result of ignorance? Foreign correspondents have sometimes enlightened their own people as to the treatment of the British prisoners, as for instance L. Mokveld, Dutch War Correspondent, in his paper 'De Tijd.' He makes the following statement:—

"We arrived at Landen, a place between Tirlemont and Waremme, where we had a stop of forty minutes in order to feed the wounded. Soup was served from large washing-tubs, and I and my small companion were also offered some of this soldier's food. When I had finished my meal and walked up and down the platform in order to stretch my legs, my attention was drawn to an uproar in front of one of the last waggons. I went there, and shall not forget what I saw as long as I live; I wish that I had never seen it.

"Amongst some Frenchmen three British soldiers, seriously wounded, were lying on some straw. They looked distressed, and I thought that their condition was critical. I was told that these men had not had any food for five days, and now there stood in front of the open waggon doors two to three hundred German soldiers partly slightly wounded, who were well able to walk, partly German soldiers of the Landen garrison, who had been told off for distributing the soup. These two or three hundred men raged and jeered at those three unfortunate, heavily wounded British soldiers, who had not eaten for five days, and lay groaning helplessly on some dirty straw in a cattle-truck. The steaming tubs with hot soup were shown them, and these Germans shouted at them: 'You want to eat, swine, swine; you ought to be killed! Beat them to death! Beat them to death! Here, that's what you ought to get!'

"As they spoke these last words they aimed their rifles at the unfortunate, bleeding, helpless, and hungry creatures. Others spat on their clothes and in their faces, and the

enraged Germans foamed at the mouth.

"With weak eyes, eyes telling of approaching death, one of them gazed at these cruel torturers, or looked hungrily at the steaming soup; the two others had turned their heads on one side and closed their eyes. But at last also the third turned off his head and closed his eyes, sighing and groaning. In the meantime the Germans went on threatening them, blurting out all sorts of filthy abuse, spitting or threatening them with their rifles, while others were laughing and enjoying the helplessness of these three.

"I stood dumb, aghast, unable to utter a word. Then I went to a sergeant, who was also looking on and laughing; and, trembling all over, I said—

"'What is happening here is frightful; these men are also human beings, who had to do their duty as much as you!'

"I could not say more, my voice stuck in my throat.

"And what was his answer?

"'What? Do their duty? No, they are swine—paid swine; they get money for their dirty work, the swine!'

"I did not answer. I could not. Silently I looked a little longer at the beastly scene, only sorry that I was not a giant who, with one strong hand, might restrain the roughs, and refresh with the other the burning, feverish lips of the wretched men.

"What distressed me most was that among those two or three hundred soldiers in front of the open cattle-truck was not one man who wanted to take the part of these unfortunate British; no, not one!

"When I reported the occurrence to 'De Tijd,' I was fully conscious of the frightful accusation implied by my information; but I am prepared to confirm with the most sacred oaths that nothing in this accusation is untrue or exaggerated.

"I was not afraid of an inquiry, but asked for it as a matter of fact by writing in my report:—

> "'And, if the German authorities intend to institute a serious and impartial inquiry, then I give them the following particulars:
>
> "'It happened at Landen on Friday, October 9, in the train with wounded which arrived there from Brussels at about noon, when food was being distributed.'"

Another account[1] from the paper 'La Victoire,' May 1917, is as follows:—

"We have received the following document from a friend who has come back from the Somme, a thoroughly reliable man:—

"A group of one hundred and fifty English, made prisoners at the front at the Somme, were placed in Ronssoy in November 1916. These soldiers were obliged to go and work at Heudicourt, eight kilometres from Ronssoy (that is five miles). They had to walk sixteen kilometres each day, over and above their work, and the station of Heudicourt was under the fire of the English and French guns.

"These prisoners had no greatcoats, and did not possess any change of underclothing. They had no water to wash.

"The English prisoners had only one loaf of a little over two lbs. for six days, while the Russian and French prisoners had the same quantity for three days. They were like famished animals. They looked into the courtyards, on to the dung-heaps, and if they found anything thrown away, or potato peelings, they threw themselves upon them. If they did this, the Germans rushed at them with fearful blows of the rifle, breaking their ribs and putting out their shoulders, and made them return to the ranks.

"If a civilian wished to give something to them he was immediately arrested, conducted to the Commandant, and condemned to prison or a fine; but the fine was generally paid by a collection in the neighbourhood.

"It was reported to me by people perfectly worthy of confidence that

[1] Translated from the French.

an English sergeant, who was not able to get up in the morning, was set up on his feet three times by his comrades by order of the Germans. The last time he fell dead. Another cried out dying: 'Tell my parents that I die of hunger.'

"Another, perceiving a beetroot at the edge of a field, rushed forward and jumped the slope to get it, but he fell, knocked down by a blow of a rifle; and as an excuse for this crime they said he 'was trying to run away,' or 'stealing is forbidden.'

"I will now relate what I saw myself.

"In December 1916, in spite of all the orders to the contrary, the inhabitants performed miracles in order to give these martyrs something to eat.

"Having spoken to a sentry who seemed kindly disposed, I succeeded in getting into the shed, where I distributed belts, pocket-handkerchiefs, and shirts to each one of them. They then numbered one hundred and thirty-five.

"With the aid of many of the inhabitants it was possible for me to distribute food and some good coffee. At the end of the day the German sergeant pointed out to me two prisoners who had no boots, and another who had only a pair of trousers completely worn out.

"The next day the Commandant put out a new Order that it was forbidden to give anything whatever to the prisoners, under penalty of most severe punishment. It was after this publication that, having made a visit to the Commandant, I proposed to organise the gifts, and thus avoid the disorders in the street. The German sergeant should distribute them after the work was over, in order that each one should get his share.

"The Commandant considered my request, and promised to do all that I desired. As I went out of the Commandant's office I met the one hundred and thirty-five English prisoners in the street returning to Ronssoy. The unhappy men recognised me, and began to sing the National Anthem.

"A few yards farther on I found the hospital where the German General was living.

"Half an hour later I was informed that nothing could be granted, and that the inhabitants would not be allowed to do anything for the English prisoners.

"In spite of this they tried to succour them with the help of children. The little girls did not always escape the brutalities of the soldiers; but the little boys, more adventurous, went so far as to throw snowballs at the backs of the German soldiers, who ran after them; then another boy—hidden a little farther along—ran in and distributed some packets.

"The cold in January of this year 1917 was disastrous for this group of prisoners. Sometimes one of them would have his feet frozen, or would fall senseless upon the steps of a house. Woe be to the inhabitant who would give a basin of soup or of coffee. He was pursued with kicks and blows from the rifle. These cases happened more than twenty times.

"One evening a prisoner, having his feet frozen, was carried by his comrades to the hospital, which was at the Church of Epehy. They were forbidden to go in, and, after having waited for an hour at the door in the frost, his comrades were authorised to take a stretcher to carry him three kilometres farther to Ronssoy.

"One day, when they were going off to work, a prisoner fell when he arrived at Epehy. A woman, seeing how ill he was, wished to give him some coffee, but she was repulsed twice; the third time the German soldiers, fearing that their prisoner was dying, permitted her to give him some attention. The poor martyr had neither shirt nor trousers.

"It was reported to me that the prisoners, when they were absolutely exhausted, all made the same entreaty. They begged their brutal guards to put an end to their misery and to shoot them all.

"The last of them that I saw was at the end of January 1917. They were on the platform of a waggon, without any awning. Perceiving that there were bodies stretched out under the coverings, I followed the vehicle, when one of them, raising himself up, appeared to me like

a skeleton; he made me signs of farewell with his hand, and said something to his comrades. Several of them tried to raise themselves, but they fell back at once. They were taken to the station at Epehy, and from there probably to the hospital at Cambrai.

"How many of them remain now? —perhaps not one.

"That was the fate of the English soldier prisoners in the hands of the Germans, as I knew it at Epehy."

Why were not these accounts, widely known in other countries, circulated here?

When a question was asked in the House of Lords some weeks ago (1918) whether the whole truth of the experiences of our prisoners in Germany could not be told, so that the public might realise the German system of organised brutality, Lord Stanhope, replying for the Government, said that it was felt that any idea of an unsatisfactory peace was far less likely to be accepted in this country if the truth as to the treatment of our prisoners in Germany was understood! Why has not this policy been pursued during the past four years? Individuals, who have been interested in the question, have been able to get information from Blue-books, but the public knows nothing of these. For instance, it was reported by the American Embassy in Berlin that a notice was seen posted up in a working camp with British prisoners, dated March 16, 1916, which ran as follows:—

"*The guards are especially enjoined energetically to keep the prisoners at work. Should the attitude of the prisoner demand the use of the weapon, this should be employed without regard to consequences. In the first place, the bayonet only is to be employed.*"

What a fearful light these few words shed on this ghastly subject.

Again another case. A Russian prisoner returned from a German prison camp to Petrograd, and examined by the President of the Commission of Enquiry, stated:

"In February 1916, one hundred Englishmen were brought in to that camp. On the first day after their arrival they refused to work. They were then ranked up and surrounded by about twenty German soldiers with fixed bayonets, who drove them to work with their fists and the butt-end of their rifles. On the way one of the Englishmen halted, and half a dozen Germans of the escort rushed at him and knocked him down, and stabbed him with bayonets. A German sergeant-major went up to the Englishman, and began to kick him. All this took place before my very eyes. The Englishman died in two days. I do not know his name. Langemor was the camp, and the Commandant, a German named *Beleakin*, was noted for his cruelty. He ordered the soldiers of the escort to beat and starve the men who declined to work. The escorting soldiers themselves declared that it was impossible to find another man as cruel as the Commandant."

These refusals to work are often because the prisoners are too weak. Beaten by rifles and starved, they are often hardly able to stand.

The exchanged prisoners now arriving in this country show too plainly the harsh treatment they have received.

On August 18, 1918, 440

prisoners arrived in London. Of these 440, 172 were too ill to walk, and besides these there were 30 mental cases. Some of the prisoners looked like ghosts; others looked starved and miserable; many of them had but one leg. They had been in a camp, where no bread or food parcels reached them. More than half of the prisoners consisted of men who had been captured either on or after March 21, 1918. The majority of them were young and frail-looking.

The many mental cases testify to the brutality of the treatment these unfortunate people have received.

Have not the people of this country shown a strange apathy and indifference to the sufferings of the men who have defended them? Certainly they do their best to feed them, not always successfully, as Sir George Aston reports that twenty thousand parcels are lying at some depot, and not distributed.

It would be impossible here to give one hundredth part of the cases of shocking cruelty which have been reported.

The latest form of torture appears to have been inflicted by German officers who have been imprisoned in England, and have returned to Germany. They have been placed in positions of command in the prison camps, and are reported to delight in worrying the prisoners. This is the more astonishing, as we all know in this country the indulgence and leniency which has been extended to German prisoners here—especially to the officers.

It is a great question whether enough effort has been made to make known in Germany the good treatment of German prisoners here. English papers, until recently, were read largely in Germany, and it would have been perfectly easy to have conveyed the information persistently and continuously, and to have had the truth of such reports officially guaranteed. There might then have been some hope of reciprocal treatment. When some German officers escaped from Donnington Hall, one, who was recaptured, was asked whether he had not been comfortable. He said he had been quite comfortable, but he missed the lighter shades of life!

We are now told that German officers have been taken out to drive in motor-cars and meet their friends.

A German of the name of Markel, a naturalised Englishman, has been allowed to do everything possible for the German prisoners in this country, but he stated that his work was to be carried out in profound secrecy, otherwise he would not be allowed to carry it on. He was allowed to spend several thousand pounds a month on getting things to make the prisoners happy and comfortable. His statements at different times ran as follows:—

"The first thing was to relieve the monotony of confinement, and to help the prisoners to forget their woes.

"I obtained the necessary permission from the War Office, and

with the aid of my friends I sent some thousands of books. I was permitted to visit the camps, and given facilities by the authorities of coming in personal contact with the prisoners, which is the only way to make sure of effective work. During these visits I saw that as far as material conditions were concerned the prisoners were generously and kindly treated, but what I saw and heard also suggested to me many things that were necessary if we were to prevent the gradual decay of body, mind, and spirit, so hard to separate from captivity and enforced idleness. I might mention outdoor and indoor games, music, gymnastic apparatus, and facilities for study—but, of course, the main thing was to find the prisoners something useful to do. We have therefore, from the beginning, given co-operation to all agencies working to that end.

"We have also made it our business, so far as we can, to provide such remedies and palliatives as are not locally available for all who suffer from bodily ailments,—artificial eyes, teeth, surgical appliances, &c. Wherever there is a dentist among the prisoners, we supply him with a complete set of instruments and materials for his profession, on condition that he treats his poorer patients at a reduced fee at our own cost. The arrangements which we have in operation in this respect have been a special boon, as we have found diseased and defective teeth a great source of suffering and sickness in the camps.

"We make every effort to supply not only individual needs, but also those which are for the good of the whole camp. Thus we rig out schools with all the requirements for teaching and study, artists and craftsmen with tools and materials, orchestras and bands with musical instruments and music. Apart from gifts of music, our Musical Department is in operation, and a most excellent circulating library of musical scores. We also supply gymnastic apparatus, theatrical requirements, athletic outfits of all sorts, and, in short, complete apparatus for every kind of outdoor and indoor game.

"The sick or wounded, of course, whether in hospital or camps, have for us a very special interest, and all those cases, unfortunately so numerous, where prisoners suffer from physical defects or chronic maladies. Where indicated, we supplement the diet with special strengthening foods, and supply medical comforts and palliatives.

"Our aim, which we pursued unremittingly, is to provide the prisoners with wholesome productive work which shall be as interesting and educative as possible. The supply of implements and materials for all sorts of handicrafts has been a very big item. In this we have received most generous assistance from a committee interested in the prisoners, with whom we have co-operated in maintaining a department exclusively for this work, with a technical expert in arts and handicrafts as adviser, who travels from camp to camp devoting his whole time to the work. Workshops have been erected and equipped in nearly every camp, where a large variety of goods are produced.

"The Library and Educational Department, to which I have already referred, is doing a great work. Correspondence is kept up with the various camp libraries, and not only are these latter kept constantly supplied with fresh general literature, but text-books are provided for all camp classes and in response to individual requests from students. It has often been difficult to satisfy their wants; but the Red Cross has come to the rescue, especially with language text-books, grammars, and dictionaries, for which the demand has been enormous, and we are now getting help for the higher class of students from an Academical Committee in Berlin.

"The commandants (of the camps) have in many cases enthusiastically seconded us (in our work), as they realise better than anybody else how essential is productive employment in maintaining a healthy atmosphere of happy activity. Generally, in fact, I cannot speak too highly of the commandants. They have universally shown themselves English gentlemen in the best sense. Their attitude to their charges, so far from

being harsh, has been generally of the kindest. They recognise that there is nothing whatever of a penal nature about internment, which is simply an unfortunate necessity of defence; and many of them give the most conscientious thought of devising all the measures in their power for mitigating the evils of concentration, their ideal being, as one of them well put it, 'that the men should come out of the camp as sound in mind and body as they went in.'[1]

"The administration of the British camps is now, generally speaking, above reproach.

"That there is not a similar organisation in Germany for British prisoners is a matter of sincere regret to me, and that more is not being done by the German people in this matter.

"I can testify to the humanity which has characterised the British Government's dealings with its prisoners; and I feel that, if this were thoroughly well known and appreciated in Germany, and if all the reports to the contrary were contradicted, some sort of work such as I am permitted to do here would probably be permitted in the British camps in Germany."

This is evidently much too optimistic a view; but more might have been done in attempting to rouse the consciences of those in Germany, and there must be some who abhor the dreadful cruelties which have been practised on helpless captives. Had Dr Markel not been obliged to carry on his work in secret, it would have been impossible for the fiction of the cruel treatment of German prisoners in England to be so extensively propagated.

Only a few weeks ago—September 1918—a document signed by Ludendorf, conveying instructions and threats as to the behaviour of German soldiers in the event of capture, fell into the hands of the British. It says:

"Capture at the hands of the inhuman foes, in view of their unexampled brutality of treatment, which is now proven beyond question in so large a number of cases, merely means being slowly tortured to death."

We must suppose that these infamous lies about the treatment of German prisoners in this country are in some way useful to the Germans. Truth is nothing to them; but for the sake of our unfortunate British prisoners in their hands it surely would have been wise to persist in making known the almost unexampled leniency and indulgence which has been accorded to prisoners in this country. Perhaps this leniency cannot be better exemplified than by the state-

---

[1] Contrast this with the account of our men just returned from prison camps in Germany (October 1918):—

"Some were almost in rags. Their faces were wan and waxlike. Sallow skins and emaciated forms told of insufficient nourishment. They spoke but little.

"Their eyes glanced round pitifully in the dim light—just wrecks of men, some of them. They were home at last, but too broken to show relief or joy. The cruelty and semi-starvation had left the mark of the Hun beast."

The abominable fact stares us in the face that we shall probably receive from Germany one hundred and fifty thousand men, diseased and hopelessly broken down, while we shall return to Germany even a greater number, full of health and strength.

ment in the 'Times' of August 29:

"The police have arrested four German prisoners of war on a charge of criminally assaulting a girl of sixteen years of age."

Again, in the 'Times' of September 13, there is the following announcement, which shows incredible leniency:

"In some parts of the country German prisoners have become a public scandal. Evidence has reached the authorities that, owing to the laxity that has been permitted in some cases, German prisoners are engaged in propaganda, having for its objects the encouragement of pacifists and a general weakening of the war spirit of the country."

What scandalous laxity such reports indicate!

The Government Report of the treatment by Germany of the native races in her colonies in Africa has just been published. It is an unbroken record of hideous cruelties extending over a long series of years.

In 1884 a Conference took place at Berlin on the African question. The Conference placed on record their recognition of the sacred duty—

1. Of preserving the aboriginal races of Africa.
2. Of watching over their interests.
3. Of cultivating their moral and material advancement and development.

Let us note well these promises.

In 1890 Germany was again very prominent at the Anti-Slavery Conference in Brussels, when it was placed on record, by solemn pledge and resolution, that it was the emphatic desire of the conferring Powers effectively to protect the native races of Africa from oppression and slavery.

The pronouncement of this humane and enlightened policy caused the statesmen of Great Britain to have no hesitation in welcoming the German Government into the arena of world colonisation as a co-partner in the great work of civilising and uplifting the heathen races of the earth!

Great Britain allowed Germany to annex 322,000 square miles of territory in South-West Africa, and by a stroke of the pen placed the Hereros and five other tribal groups of the inhabitants of that vast land under the guardianship and control of the German Emperor. After annexation had become an accomplished fact, and German statesmen had done their work, true German opinion began to reveal itself, and not many years after annexation the real German policy was made horribly manifest to the unfortunate natives of South-West Africa. From that time onwards it is one constant tale of infamous and devilish treatment of the natives by Germans.

The present British Administrator of South-West Africa has collected all the evidence, and it should be

read by every one who wishes to know the truth about the German colonies.

The story of the extermination and persecution of the Herero people is one of the most appalling in modern history. This tribe is described as an intelligent, honest, and proud people—candid and sincere, frugal and industrious, reliable and trustworthy. Even so long ago as 1760 they were known as great cattle owners, and when Germany annexed the country they had probably well over 150,000 head of cattle. Their Chief was a man of wonderful character. In 1904 a new Commander, General von Trotha, was sent to South-West Africa. He was noted in Berlin for his merciless severity in dealing with natives. He had just suppressed the Arab rebellion in East Africa by bathing that country in the blood of thousands and thousands of its inhabitants. The record of his treachery and cruelty was unsurpassed. He issued an order of extermination against the Hereros. "Kill every one of them," he said, "and take no prisoners."

The unfortunate people had tried to rebel, as well they might, but the contest was a hopeless one. Out of between 80,000 and 90,000 souls, only about 15,000 surviving and fugitive Hereros were alive at the end of 1905.

Some of the evidence taken by the Administrator is as follows:—

"On one occasion I saw about twenty-five prisoners placed in a small enclosure of thorn-bushes. They were confined in a very small space, and the soldiers cut dry branches and piled dried logs all round them—men, women, and children and little girls were there; when dry branches had been thickly piled up all round them, the soldiers threw branches also on top of them. The prisoners were all alive and unwounded, but half starved. Having piled up the branches, lamp oil was sprinkled on the heap and it was set on fire. The prisoners were burnt to a cinder. I saw this personally. The Germans said: 'We should burn all these dogs and baboons in this fashion.' The officers saw this, and made no attempt to prevent it. The Hereros were merely fugitives in the bush. All water-holes on the desert border were poisoned by the Germans before they returned. The result was that fugitives who came to drink the water either died of poisoning, or, if they did not taste the water, they died of thirst."

The Administrator states:

"Evidence of violation of women and girls is overwhelming, but so full of filthy and atrocious details as to render publication undesirable."

Another witness states he went with the German troops. They killed thousands and thousands of women and children along the roadsides. They bayoneted them and hit them to death with the butt-ends of their guns. Words cannot be found to relate what happened; it was too terrible. They were lying exhausted and harmless along the roads, and as the soldiers passed they simply slaughtered them in cold blood. Mothers holding babies at their breasts, little boys and little girls; old people too old to fight, and

old grandmothers — none received mercy; they were killed, all of them, and left to lie and rot on the veld for the vultures and wild animals to eat.

Another witness states that he saw this bloody work for days and days, and every day. "The young Herero women and girls were violated by the German soldiers before being killed. Two of my Hottentots were invited by the German soldiers to join them in violating Herero girls. The two Hottentots refused to do so."

When viewed from the point of view of civilisation and common humanity, what a comparison there is between this German barbarism and the attitude of the Herero chiefs, who, before a shot was fired, ordered their people to spare the lives of all German women and children and non-combatants!

The other tribes were treated with equal barbarity — parcelled out to farmers, separated from wives and children, thrown into jail on the slightest pretext, starved, flogged to death, and hung. These sickening records would require to be read to be believed.

The Administrator writes:

"The foregoing statements, made on oath in the course of the past four months, will give some faint idea of the reign of terror which existed amongst the natives of South-West Africa. Instances of cruelty, injustice, and barbarism might be multiplied almost indefinitely. Instances of gross and bestial conduct, which for sheer depravity and immorality are wellnigh unbelievable, are also contained in the files of affidavits, but they are hardly fit for publication.

"This state of affairs continued right up to the occupation of South-West Africa by the British troops under General Botha in 1915, and the records of the Special Criminal Court appointed under the British régime will indicate that the German settlers, not quite appreciating that the old order had changed, took some time to grasp the fact that under British rule wholesale shootings and floggings of natives and inhuman brutality towards their defenceless servants would not for one moment be tolerated.

"The natives talk all day long about the new Government, and say they hope and pray that England will keep this country and govern them. They are in terror at the very idea of the German Government coming back."

When the country was conquered by the British an agreement was come to that the German farmers and the reservists should remain. It is possible that these people will join in the imperious demand by the German Government that the Colonies be given back to them, but the British people will never consent to such an infamy.

It is advisable that some of the instruments of torture—such as chains, the leg and arm fetters—should be sent to this country for exhibition; also the sjambok made of hide with which the natives were thrashed, often to death.

What is this nation which makes these solemn promises of watching over the interests of the natives of Africa, and of cultivating their moral and material advancement and development, and as soon as it

gets them in its power proceeds to murder and degrade them in the most inhuman manner? Was there ever such a nation of liars?

There is another aspect of this question of the German occupation of Africa which is even of more importance to the world in general than the question of the treatment of the natives.

The following account by a British official of a visit which he paid to a neighbouring German settlement in Central Africa gives a very clear picture of what was going on. This was written some years before there was any thought of war:—

"The German colonisation methods are very different from our own. Where we employ twenty civil police, he scatters Soudanese soldiers broadcast over the landscape. He sees to it that every man of the black fighting force has an up-to-date rifle, and is taught to use it by constant practice on the ranges, with which every station is equipped; while, by dint of unremitting route-marches and incessant parades, he ensures that his army shall understand at least the rudimentary notions of automatic discipline and soldierly endurance."

The German barrack square reminded him of the trim methodical Fatherland. "On either side of the massive arched gateway there are the familiar zebra-coloured sentry-boxes, with a business-like black sentry standing outside each, while in the background the trim quarters of the soldiers are drawn up row upon row, and the ground itself is swept and garnished. The place is a fortress, and is intended to be used as such, should necessity arise in the shape of native disturbance. From a strategic point of view I should say that it is quite impregnable to native attack. There are barracks, stables, storehouses, and an arsenal, and the harbour."

He had no doubt that illicit trading was going on, passing through these "sleeping sickness" areas in danger of communicating infection, but he could not in any way make representations, as he was the guest of the German Commandant. There was a Commandant, a senior Lieutenant of the German Colonial troops.

Down by the harbour a wide firm road had been cut out of the mountain-side, and the outer slope banked with stone. Early in the morning the inhabitants were awakened by the roll of drums on the changing of the night guard at the gates. Out at the back, beyond the gates, the army was on parade, and very smart and business-like it was. Farther up the hill the perpetual crack of rifles told him that musketry was going on. These Soudanese troops were made of the stuff of soldiers and highly trained. They are an expensive and superior class of native imported into a country where the local standard is extremely primitive.

"The German tenure of the country is more in the nature of an armed occupation than of colonisation. They do not pretend to dispense justice. German colonisation partakes of the nature of compressing the spirit of

tropical peoples into a hard-and-fast groove, and her methods are flavoured with the atmosphere of the barrack and the police court, but she seems to attain her ends. She develops her commercial interests in these far-off East African countries. Her fleets range far and wide down the whole length of the coast. She has captured the bulk of the sea-borne trade in these parts. Tanganyika is, for all practical purposes, her waterway.

"It would seem that the African native is the last person in the world to assimilate the rigid disciplinarian outlook of the Teuton, but perhaps we shall find in the years to come that Central Africa has been transformed into a vaster Prussia, with green-uniformed Customs officials and stringent municipal regulations. It may be that, in the future, the German Central African will find that his only chance of not being improved altogether off the face of the globe will lie in embracing the principles of compulsory and universal military service."

Can it be doubted that, if the German Colonies were given back to Germany, they would set about forming an immense army of blacks, which would soon be capable of overawing the world.

Dr Solf, the German Colonial Minister, clamours incessantly for the return of these colonies. He bases his claim on Germany's proved ability to participate in the uplifting work of civilisation among backward races!

After Mr Balfour's announcement that we should not give back these colonies, Dr Solf made a speech, which, for brazen lying, can hardly be exceeded. He asks:

"Has Mr Balfour forgotten Germany is the only Power waging war which has definitely adopted the demilitarisation of Africa as one of her war aims? We desire a settlement of the Colonial question on the principle that Colonial possessions shall extend to the merits of the European nations in the protection of the coloured races entrusted to their care. Colonisation means mission work. These States which endeavoured to act before the war on the principle of respecting humanity also in the coloured races, have won the moral right to be Colonial Powers. This right was won by Germany before the war."

For some months Germany has been conducting an inspired campaign in her Press with a view to working up the feelings of the people regarding German Colonies. Ludendorff, Hindenburg, the Crown Prince, von Hertling, have had facsimile letters reproduced in the German newspapers, saying that Germany must have colonies in order to give her raw material for the period of the war. The total value of the raw materials exported from German colonies before the war was at its highest £5,000,000 per annum. The raw material that Germany wants is not the raw material of commerce, but the raw material of war. She would be able to raise a huge black army, and to have a series of submarine bases from which at any moment, when she cared to renew the war, she would be able to terrorise and paralyse the mercantile shipping of the world. It is with a view to establishing points for feeding her submarine fleet that Germany is making all the fuss about her Colonies. She wants to be within easy reach of every important trade route on the high seas. So much

so that a society for the study of submarines has been started in Berlin, and the Germans are doing their utmost to get Germans in foreign countries as members. It is very easy to see through such scheming on the part of Berlin, which scheming we can make very sure will come to nothing by the simple measure of disposing of the German Colonies in any fashion whatsoever other than leaving them to Germany.

Dr Karstedt, the editor of the 'German Colonial Journal,' writes of the necessity of having stations in Africa which would be capable of serving at any moment as munition depots, coaling stations, docks, &c.

"Think for a moment," he says, "how far more deadly the work of German cruisers might have been if Dar-es-Salaam, on the Indian Ocean, or Ludoritz Bay and Duala, on the Atlantic, had been fully fitted out naval bases, in which our ships would have had facilities for getting in fresh supplies or effecting repairs.

"Within the territory (of German Mittel-Afrika) there would be enough places on the coast which, when properly fortified and equipped, would be capable of furnishing Germany with the naval bases which it absolutely *must have* upon the Atlantic and the Indian Oceans. Such a German oversea empire in Africa would be able to bid defiance to the strongholds of British power in Africa (Egypt and South Africa), the mainstays of the whole British world-power. It would give us not only a great part of what we want in order to be economically independent of England, but it would also put the means into our hands of *striking England home* at any moment with the help of our navy and the manpower latent in this future dominion."

Deadly indeed would have been the work of the German cruisers if, in the past, she had possessed the naval bases which, if the world should be weak enough to allow, she is evidently determined to secure in the future. Her reliance on submarine warfare, the deadliest enemy of the peace of the world, is constantly in evidence. To-day—October 1918—the head of the submarine department of the German Navy is appointed to the supreme command of the Navy.

Herr Trietsch, a German writer, states:

"In future wars Germany, if only by using the new military weapons acquired and perfected in this war, would be able to threaten England's Colonial dominion to a far greater extent.

"With a *compactness* extending now not only over one continent, *but over a great part of the globe*, Germany could deal such blows on the world-wide interests and far-scattered colonies of her opponents as would pre-eminently deter them from challenging her again."

We often hear the German demand of "the freedom of the seas." Before the war the ships of every nation sailed every sea in perfect safety. The German ships coaled at our ports, and ran in and out of our harbours as they pleased. Count Reventlow, in March 1917, gave a lecture in Berlin on this subject, which it is interesting to recall:

"What do we Germans understand by the freedom of the seas?" he said. "Of course, we do not mean by it that free use of the sea which is the common privilege of all nations in times of peace, the right to the open

highways of international trade. That sort of freedom of the sea we had before the war. What we understand to-day by this doctrine is that Germany should possess such maritime territories and such naval bases that at the outbreak of a war we should be able, with our navy ready, reasonably to guarantee ourselves the command of the seas. We want such a jumping-off place for our navy as would give us a fair chance of dominating the seas and of being free of the seas during a war.

"The inalienable possession of the Belgian seaboard is, therefore, a matter of life and death to us, and the man is a traitor who would faintheartedly relinquish this coast to England. Our aim must be not only to keep what our arms have already won on this coast, but sooner or later to extend our seaboard to the south of the Strait of Calais."

Now we know what Germany means by "the freedom of the seas!"

Surely if ever a country was forewarned of the designs of her foes for her destruction and downfall, Great Britain is that country, and if her statesmen allow these warnings to go unheeded, our fearful sacrifices will have been made in vain.

The working classes of this country have probably never thoroughly grasped the fact that one of the plans of Germany was practically for their enslavement.

A distinguished professor of Germany in a conversation with an Oxford professor, some few years before the war, said:

"Great conflicts must arise when an old world-Power is destroyed by a new one, and many sad events must take place, but the war is a necessity for Germany, because England has so much that is absolutely necessary for Germany to possess, in order to fulfil her rôle as a world-State. She must have ports and colonies in many parts of the world—Australia, South Africa, Hong-Kong, India.

"England is not really strong, but there has been no strong Power to dispute these great sources of wealth with her. These sources of wealth must fall to a new world-Power, and that is clearly Germany."

The most remarkable part of this conversation relates to the British workman. The professor said:

"Our German workpeople are the best in the world, they know that, and they also know that their army and their navy are the weapons of blood and steel which can open the world and give them wealth and power as the competent directors of workmen, who under their supervision would do more for the world than they would otherwise do. They know they can thus become rich masters themselves. In England, for instance, the workmen are idle and capricious, but under a strong régime they would work well, and disciplined as they would be with us, they would recognise their own place and become content with it."

"Disciplined as they would be with us!" This should surely be a warning to the British workman of the plans for his subjugation formulated in the minds of German manufacturers and German workmen.

As Mr Rudyard Kipling said in February 1918:

"We are fighting that we may not be herded into actual slavery such as the Germans have established by force of their arms in large parts of Europe. We are fighting against eighteen hours a day forced labour under the lash or at the point of the bayonet, with a dog's death and a dog's burial at the end of it. If we are defeated labour will become a thing to be knocked on the head if it dares to give trouble, or worked to death if it does not. And from this

order of life there will be no appeal, no possibility of any escape.

"We are fighting," he said, "that men, women, and children may not be tortured, burnt, and mutilated in the public streets as happened in this town (Folkestone) and in many others. And we will go on fighting till the race who have done these things are in no position to continue or repeat their offence."

It may be thought that Mr Rudyard Kipling takes an exaggerated view of the treatment which would be accorded to the working classes if the Germans had conquered and invaded this country, but it is not so. The Germans overran the North of Italy, and the Proclamation issued by the Headquarters of the German Military Government was as follows:—

"A house-to-house search will be made for all concealed arms, weapons, and ammunition.

"All victuals remaining in the house must be delivered up.

"Every citizen must obey our labour regulations.

"All workmen, women, and children over fifteen years old are obliged to work in the fields every day, Sundays included, from 4 A.M. to 8 P.M.

"Disobedience will be punished in the following manner:

"1. Lazy workmen will be accompanied to their work and watched by Germans. After the harvest they will be Imprisoned for six months, and every third day will be given Nothing But Bread And Water.

"2. Lazy women will be obliged to work, and after the harvest receive Six Months' Imprisonment.

"3. Lazy children Will Be Punished By Beating. The Commandant Reserves The Right To Punish Lazy Workmen With 20 Lashes Daily."

These terms speak for themselves!

The treatment in this country would probably have been still more cruel, for after Rumania had been conquered and the so-called Peace made, which really enslaved the country of Rumania, the Rumanian Ministers remonstrated at the harshness of the terms, and were told by the German envoys that they would think the terms moderate if they could know what terms had been prepared for France and England.

The system of lying seems to have been developed into almost an art amongst the German people. They use it as a weapon of political warfare without shame and without reserve. A glaring instance of this has lately appeared. The Germans, after using asphyxiating gas for more than three years, now find that the gas which our army has been compelled to use in self-defence is troubling them very much, probably because they have not sufficient rubber for their masks. They therefore put out feelers to the Red Cross to propose the suspension of the use of gas, upon which that Society apparently made an appeal to the belligerent Powers. The following official announcement is made by the German Government:—

"The German Government appreciate the appeal all the more, because, before the opening of the war, the points of view which it had adopted for its guidance in methods of war was that the combatants should abstain from using weapons which, owing to their particularly cruel effects, must be regarded as opposed to the laws of humanity. In

the course of the present war the High Command never ceased to take peculiar care to see that all measures which might cause useless cruelty were avoided as long as the conduct of the enemy, by rendering a countermeasure necessary, did not compel it to take a different attitude. Although the war methods of the enemies of Germany, in conformity with their determination to destroy Germany, continually proclaimed by the responsible Statesmen, more and more approached a procedure reminiscent of the darkest epochs in their barbarous style of fighting, the High Command did not cease to act in accordance with its principles. The German Government preferred to allow its adversaries to bring upon the European battlefield savage races who were proved to have committed unheard-of atrocities, and to treat with harshest cruelty peaceful civilians, old men, women, and children, who had had the misfortune to fall into their hands, and to be generally guilty of all the crimes against which Germany has for years protested in the face of the whole world. In spite of all, the German people refused to employ similar methods of fighting, just as it is impossible to find in the German press attacks of the character appearing daily in the greatest newspapers in enemy countries, where the Germans are constantly styled Huns and barbarians.

"As regards the use of deleterious and asphyxiating gases, the High Command only launched gas attacks after their adversaries had for a long time been employing this weapon. A feeling of responsibility to fellow-citizens must naturally prevent the High Command from renouncing on its part a method of fighting which, however cruel, was efficacious, simply to spare the enemy the sufferings which they saw fit to inflict upon German soldiers in ever increasing measure. The German official communiqué of March 1, 1915, established the use of asphyxiating gas by the enemy, but it was not until April 24 of the same year that the British and French communiqué even mentioned German gas attacks.

"It is thus evident there can be no question of the German Government making proposals for the suppression of or restricting the use of asphyxiating gases. On the other hand, to refuse to examine any serious proposal which was likely to soften the sufferings caused by war would be to run counter to the true spirit of humanity with which the army, people, Parliament, and the Government of Germany are imbued.

"If the countries at war with Germany approach the German Government with a proposal on the subject, the Government will not hesitate exhaustively to study the question, to see how far it is possible to give adherence to such proposals without prejudice to the vital interests of the German people, and how far there are sufficient guarantees that agreements, if it is possible to conclude them, shall be really observed by the adversaries of Germany."

To fully appreciate the astounding falsehoods which occur in every line of this communication, we have only to look back to that day when this devilish invention was first launched against our troops. Who that read the account of those agonised, writhing bodies can ever forget it; and it was months before the soft-hearted people in this country, who were always inveighing against reprisals, were brought to see that only by reprisals could such devilry be overcome. Yet now, the people who planned this fiendish instrument of warfare, who must for years have been preparing and experimenting with it, say that the British began it, and that they were compelled to follow!

From this sickening tissue of lies we turn to another column of the same paper of

Sept. 21, 1918, and find the following:—

"A captured German document, an order of the 108th Infantry Brigade to its rearguards, of September 5, 1918, reads:

"'A recent Army Order required that we shall proceed in the future with more method and less haste in the destruction of property which has been marked out. Divisions have already been notified that they will be held responsible for buildings not destroyed in their area. In consequence all preparations should be made for firing straw which has been collected.' Here follows a long list of villages to be burnt. 'All soldiers are bound to assist to the best of their ability in the execution of this mission. The rearguard battalion will select the groups to complete the work of destruction. These detachments will not set fire to things till 3 A.M. *It will be remembered that there are means to defile all wells.* Mines must not be exploded too soon. It is the duty of every man to co-operate in this work of destruction.'"

This damning document seems to be inspired by the Crown Prince's boast that, though defeated, he has left desolated the district of France behind him.

We must suppose from this that the poisoning of wells in Africa and in France was recognised as a legitimate mode of warfare not at all opposed to the German idea of the laws of humanity!

Truly, as Sir Robert Morier, who lived amongst these people for many years, said, in 1871, after the Franco-German war: "The devil who inhabits the innermost soul of the German is brutality."

Dr Muehlon, to whom reference has already been made, was a Director of Krupp's great armament factory at Essen in Germany. He has written what is indeed an invaluable book. It is his diary during the first months of the war. His position as a Director of Krupp's must have given him entrance to the inner circle of the leading men in Germany. It is unlikely that the world will ever have a clearer picture of Germany and the German mind and character drawn by one of themselves at the most crucial moment of their history.

This man was one of the few righteous men of whose existence we know in Germany. He left his country and is now in Switzerland.

On May 1917, he addressed a letter to the German Chancellor repudiating the German Government and all its works. When the German army entered Belgium he wrote:

"Our irruption into Belgium means fearful moral injury to ourselves. Our action is more unscrupulous than anything ever done by Bismarck or any one like him, and even a victorious war would not restore to us the confidence of Europe and the rest of the world."

He went about among his friends in Berlin expressing his horror at what had been done, but nowhere could he find any comprehension of his point of view.

He writes in September:

"Yet another discussion about the division of the spoils after the war—this time at a most confidential gathering of the tip-top manufacturing brigands! I am still quivering with shame; these modern German manufacturers are repulsive enough to make one vomit. Even foreign private property must not be spared, especially in the case of districts rich

in coal and metals, big factories and enterprises. One gentleman hotly maintained that Germany must annex Belgium at once, so that in the later peace negotiations Belgium might be eliminated from the discussion altogether. At the same time, he insisted, there must unquestionably be drastic exportation of all the more important industrial and other private businesses. In the Peace terms France is to be obliged to bear the cost of indemnifying the victims. Moreover, he said, we must not repeat the mistake we made in Alsace-Lorraine in 1870, when the leading men were allowed to remain in the country; for they are now the chief source of Alsace-Lorraine's attachment to France. This time all the influential elements in the annexed country must be compelled at once to depart, unless they unreservedly accept the new order of things. The speaker laid strong emphasis on the fact that his fellow-manufacturers, Thyssen, Stinnes, Kirdorf, were using all their influence to carry through the vigorous policy he described. These gentlemen, he said, had already applied to the Chancellor to add to the German administrative body in Belgium an industrial expert, who should go round and inspect all the industrial works and properties in Belgium, and mark everything that would be of use to Germany."

They said:

"In order that the great sacrifices of our nation may not be made in vain, we must take just as much in land and private property as we can hope to be able to digest. Moreover, it is urgently necessary to keep the imagination of our people busy after the war by pointing to the enormous enlargement of our territory and our enrichment in other ways, and also to the chances which exploitation offers.

"The population of the annexed districts would, they said, certainly be a hard nut to crack, for it was undisciplined and unused to strong government; *but it must be taught discipline and obedience by whatever means might be necessary.* Every one agreed in this, and also with the fervent appeal that after the war the German people should be brought to regard it as their most sacred duty to bring into the world as many children as possible, who will have the pleasing prospect of entering into the inheritance of those inferior and subjected peoples.

"Both in words and sense the speeches were all about power, material prosperity, spheres of activity, discipline, method. There was no thought of their justifying their domination on any other ground, no idea of any benefit or consideration which they owed to the vanquished — in short, no magnanimity. They mean to lay themselves in the other people's beds, and are quite willing to be called barbarians in return."

The following are a few other quotations from this remarkable book — describing the feeling in Germany:—

"All servants of the State to-day maintain the dogma that the State's advantage is the highest object, and one which consecrates all means. Craft, lies, forgery, deception, treachery, corruption, and murder now call forth no disgust, if only the State is advantaged."

Again, he says:

"A General writes in 'Der Tag': 'Belgium is and will remain German. Not because we wish the few millions of Belgian rabble. No! they can emigrate—but because we require their land, their minerals, above all, their coast, their harbours, that we may have our knife at England's throat.' When I objected to this way of talking, all exclaimed with one voice: 'It is as he says, he is quite right.'"

These manufacturing brigands of whom Dr Muehlon wrote, stated in his presence that after the war they must secure exclusive advantages for themselves by tariff arrangements, and demand all the French mineral districts, which

all lie near the frontier, as part of the war indemnity. "In the annexed territories we ought to take energetic measures for expropriation and expulsion. The war indemnity must be paid in goods, property, and minerals, as being more to our advantage. In this way we should achieve the important result that it would be just as impossible in France as in Belgium ever again to develop a strong iron industry."

Writing of the utter degradation of the German newspapers, he says:

"The English newspapers contain a great deal that is just and appreciative towards the Germans, while the latter have nothing but vulgar threats, envious scorn, and filthy insults for everything English. The pick of the infamous writers belong to three species—first, retired officers; secondly, clerical dignitaries; and thirdly, the worst of all—the countless university professors of the modern type. But lie on, ye barbarians! The truth will hurl you into the abyss."

He tells the awful story, which was passing from mouth to mouth, of the behaviour of Hindenburg's troops when they won their victory over the Russians:

"The enemy had been driven into the swamps, but that was not enough. Tens of thousands, who wanted to surrender and tried to climb out of the morass, were again and again pushed back by the bayonet till they were suffocated or drowned. The word of command was that no quarter should be given, too many prisoners would be a nuisance at home! For days and nights, it is said, the screams of the drowning men were heard. So piercing were their cries that they were heard above the cannon's roar, and many who were forced to listen to this shrieking chorus of despair went out of their minds.

"Ninety thousand prisoners were taken in that battle, but it is supposed that even more—far more—were murdered while helplessly imploring succour. . . . Not one has a word of pity to waste on the incident. Each, on the contrary, approves of it, and says it was the only proper course to take."

He reports a conversation with a German officer, who said to him:

"I hear that, so far as possible, no more quarter is being given. And quite right too! We already have to keep two or three hundred thousand prisoners, who are a burden and a danger to the country. It would be far better if they had been killed at once on the battlefield. The more quickly we destroy the flower and strength of the hostile nations, the sooner the war will be decided and our mastery assured."

Dr Muehlon adds: "The fellow uttered these sentiments with the familiar German childlike smile and calm gaze of blue eyes."

Concerning the devilries going on in Belgium, he writes:

"Yesterday we again discussed all this frightfulness in a considerable company of influential men. I was the only one who did not approve of it. No one has a thought of clemency even towards Belgium. . . . There is no doubt they are bent on sowing hatred and violence: they will reap the whirlwind. . . . We have shown no respect for treaties, and we can expect no different attitude from other nations towards ourselves than the one we have manifested. But the position we have adopted will not help us to success. There is a moral element in the development of humanity which will vanquish us the more we have done violence to it.

"I am only now beginning to

know my countrymen properly. Only now do I fully understand the jeer of one of our diplomatists, who said to me lately about a Dutch ambassador: 'You know that's the sort of man who believes in the sanctity of treaties, as though a treaty settled the matter!'"

With regard to Prussia, he writes:

"The Prussia of to-day can only inspire the nations of Europe with a deeper hatred, can only goad them to demoniac frenzy. Prussia will rob them of all she can, and what she steals she will want to keep. She will surrender nothing of any value to herself; and if she gives, it will always be at others' expense. Those whom she has conquered, those whom she has fallen upon and oppressed, will remain for ever under her heel. She will force every foreign people to subordinate their civilisation to her own barbarism. She believes in nothing but brute force in domestic and foreign politics alike. *She recognises no power on earth but compulsion.*"

This book presents an awful picture of cold-blooded ferocity, of greed, of the desire to plunder and murder others for their own advancement, of a deep-seated hatred and envy of England; and when we consider that it is written by a German of his own countrymen, it is indeed a startling revelation. He says he never knew them before. We also never knew them before. Dr Muehlon tells us that at one time the favourite motto was: "Let us kill every Englishman thrice over, and only half kill the French."

A series of miracles have happened, which have prevented the Germans wreaking their fury upon the people of these islands; but let us not forget the dangers which, by the mercy of God, we have escaped.

Dr Muehlon is not the only distinguished German who has left his country in disgust. Dr Stuermer, German correspondent of the German paper 'Cologne Gazette,' writes of his experiences in Constantinople. He gives an awful picture of the torture and massacre of the Armenians. He states that his wife cried out to him, in horror of what she saw:

"'You are brutes, you Germans, miserable brutes, that you tolerate this from the Turks when you have the country absolutely in your hands. You are cowardly brutes, and I will never set foot in your horrible country again. God, how I hate Germany!'

"It was then, when my own wife, trembling and sobbing in grief, rage, and disgust at such cowardliness, flung this denunciation of my country in my face, that I finally and absolutely broke with Germany. Unfortunately I had known only too long that it had to come."

The Anatolia College for Armenians in Asia Minor was the scene of frightful massacres. The Rev. George White, President of the College, states:

"One group of our College boys asked permission to sing before they died, and they sang 'Nearer, my God, to Thee'; then they were struck down."

The number of Armenians who have been massacred is estimated by an American Committee as from five hundred thousand to one million. The Turks were entirely under

the influence of the Germans. There was no resistance on the part of the Armenians whatever; the Turks had evidently decided to exterminate them. The men were sent out in lots of one and two hundred by night to the mountains, where trenches had been prepared. Peasants had been employed to kill them. They did this with axes, as they said it was a pity to waste bullets. Then the Turks turned on the women and children, the old men and little boys. Scores of ox-carts were gathered, and the women and children were swept away in them; no destination was stated or intended. Girls and young women were snatched away at every turn on the journey. The girls were sold for from two to four dollars each. The misery, the agony, the suffering were beyond power and words to express—almost beyond the power of hearts to conceive. In bereavement, thirst, hunger, loneliness, and helplessness the groups were swept on and on along roads which had no destination.

Dr Stuermer writes:

"We allowed 1,500,000 souls to be wiped out. The Armenians were progressive, possessed of a European outlook, intellectually adaptable. Such conduct on the part of the German Government would suffice to undermine the loyalty of any thinking human being who believes in humanity and civilisation."

Of the long and awful agony of Serbia we shall never know the full details. A member of the Vienna Parliament said in June 1918:

"Serbia will be saved, but there will no longer be Serbs. By hunger, by torture, by murder, these brave and fine people are being exterminated."

Thirty thousand women, children, and men were sent off to be interned in Asia Minor. Among those thirty thousand there were eight thousand women and young girls delivered over to the Turks. Of those, a great number courted death by throwing themselves out of the train conveying them to Asia Minor. War prisoners and those interned are suffering actual martyrdom. There is ravage by hunger and disease. Their number decreases daily. One-fourth of the population has already perished.

The Germans took all the beds from the Serbian hospitals; turned adrift the occupants—even those suffering from severe wounds. These beds they sent to Austria.

The Serbians of Bosnia were led away from their villages, young and old, and were compelled to dig their own graves and to lie down quietly each in his own. Many women lay down in graves with children at the breast. The soldiers then shot them one after the other, the living putting earth over the dead until their turn came. Many persons were shot with machine-guns, drowned in the Save, and burned alive bound to bundles of hay. The whole Serbo-Montenegrin frontier was turned into a desert. It is said that General Potiorek, Autocrat of Bosnia, himself signed with his own hand

five hundred death warrants from the vicinity of Nish alone.

The Germans occupied Lithuania—a part of Russia—in 1914. Very little news was allowed to go out, but the Lithuanians, who number nearly a million in the United States, received frightful accounts of the German domination. An American Lithuanian, a man of high standing, who visited his native country in 1917, gave the most shocking account of what was going on there.

Everything had been looted and everything of value taken to Germany. Furniture, books, pictures, which they did not want, they destroyed. Homes were burnt; innocent people tortured and murdered. In the methods of torture the Germans have surpassed the barbarians of the eleventh century. The poor girls, some only fourteen years of age, were stripped of all clothing, publicly violated, then murdered. Mothers, weeping, told how their young daughters were dragged away, while they knelt before soldiers and officers beseeching for the lives of their loved ones. Innocent girls were outraged and murdered in the presence of their parents. Infuriated fathers, sons, and brothers, attempting to protect their wives and sisters, their mothers and daughters, were hung to the nearest trees. Pregnant women were ill-treated, kicked, and some of them hung by Germans. Little children were torn from their mothers' hands and hurled against the walls of buildings.

In the district of Suvalki, in trenches which the Germans had evacuated, were found the bodies of fourteen girls between fourteen and twenty years of age; in another trench ten bodies, and in many other places. The people, who were forced to dig trenches for Germans, testified that these girls had been seized by German soldiers for use of their officers, and then turned back so that these same soldiers could finish them. The misery, the sufferings of the unfortunate populace are indescribable. It is beyond human power to relieve the grief, the mental anguish, the tortures of those afflicted by this calamity. Many die of wounds; many are driven mad. Some, in agony, destroy themselves while protesting against the evil that has overwhelmed humanity. There is strict military rule. All communication between cities and villages was cut off; crossing the rivers was forbidden under the penalty of death. In the cities and villages German officers issued orders to former local authorities to establish districts for prostitution for Germans. The officials refused, and were punished—either shot or exiled to prison camps. The Germans themselves established these districts, which they called hospitals. Then they forced mere girls and young women into them, and the people were taxed to maintain these "hospitals." Many Lithuanian girls committed suicide to escape German hands; not

a few burned their faces, hoping thus to prevent disgrace by destroying their beauty. The Germans finally decided to deport the male population to Germany, and thus have undisputed mastery over the women left behind unprotected. The pillage of the country was so thorough that even church bells and door knobs were taken. They have been robbed of every single thing that they possessed. The Germans gave cards, pretending that the holders of the cards would receive money afterwards for their possessions. The cards were without signature and were written in German. One man, from whom had been taken his cows and horse, was given a card upon which was written: "If this peasant asks for money, give him 700 lashes."

The Kaiser has honoured the hangman who conducted these hideous outrages. Prince Esenburg von Birnstein has been appointed Governor of Lithuania, and has been given a degree of the University of Fribourg. The Prince is distinguished for his brutality, and is without an equal in this respect. He has introduced into Lithuania corporal punishment and slavery.

The names of many of the Germans who have assisted in the martyrdom of these people are known, and they should receive punishment.

We have given these details because the same features of devilry appear in every part of the world where the Germans hold sway—both in peace and in war. Dr Muehlon truly says: "The triumph of the methods of the German Government — the methods by which it has hitherto conducted the war, both militarily and politically—would constitute a defeat for the ideas and the supreme hopes of mankind."

We know these people now as we never knew them before. Can it really now be proposed that when peace is declared these wolves in sheep's clothing shall be allowed to come over to this country without restriction, because, as the members of Lord Balfour's Government Committee state, the absence of such restrictions in the past has been favourable to the investment of capital?

If this means anything, it means that the Germans are to have free access to this country as they had before the war, and will again begin the "peaceful penetration" which so nearly brought us to destruction.

A letter from Lord Blyth to 'The Times' in July 1918 is worthy of repetition. He recalls a translation by Mr Gladstone of a wonderful passage in the Greek poet Æschylus—

"Even so, belike, might one
A lion suckling nurse
Like a foster son,
To his home a future curse,
In life's beginning mild,
Dear to sire, and kind to child;
Oft folded in his lord's embrace,
Like an infant of the race,
Sleek and smiling to the hand,
He fawned at want's command.

But in time he showed
The habit of his blood,
His debt of nurture he repaid;

The lowing herds he tore,
A fierce unbidden feast he made,
And the house was foul with gore.
Huge grief its inmates overshed,
Huge mischief, slaughter widely spread!
A heaven-sent Priest of Woe
In the Palace did he grow."

"In the past the German has been admitted to our household 'sleek and smiling to the hand,' and has 'fawned at want's command.' Our language has been an essential part of the curriculum of his schools. He has pervaded our whole national life with a single sinister purpose in view — the domination of the world.

"The German lion's cubs have been among us in a thousand shapes — scientists, professors, bankers, commercial travellers, shopkeepers, schoolmasters, waiters, working in our public institutions, business houses, shops, and hotels, and in not a few cases for a mere pittance. The vanguard of this heterogeneous army has been composed of the sons of the more opulent merchants of Germany, who, as soon as they had completed their military training, have flocked to all the principal trading cities of Britain and France, and offered their services as volunteers to our great commercial houses. Having thronged in through the open door which, in our sleepy fashion, we have left open to them, many have paid us the doubtful compliment of making this country their home. Their presence is revealed in the altered names of countless firms which, in the course of a generation, have passed wholly or partly under German influence. Others have stayed merely long enough to learn our methods of life, to compile lists of our customers, and generally to search out our weak points, with as ready a knowledge of the virtues of the decimal as of our own coinage.

"Now the time has come when the German has shown 'the habit of his blood,' and the house of Europe 'is foul with gore.' From being a tolerated or unregarded sycophant, he has revealed himself, in Mr Bonar Law's phrase, as 'the wild beast at large.'

"In the midst of all the horrors of the present struggle, should there not be some consolation in the thought that, with another dozen years of peaceful penetration, the wild beast might have dominated the globe without even showing his claws? Herr von Kuhlmann has himself admitted that Germany might have realised all her aims of aggrandisement at the expense of an unsuspecting world without having gone to war. In face of this confession, it behoves us, equally with our Allies, to take every possible precaution against a new and more audacious German bid for world-power when the present carnage has come to an end."

These are words of wisdom. The makers of this war have acted on the theory of "World-Power or Downfall." Since they have failed to accomplish the first, shall we save them from the second? Not once, but several times have they come within a hair's-breadth of success in their schemes, and if downfall does not overtake them now, it would be only in human nature that they should try again.

Dr Muehlon has shown us the picture of the industrial kings of Germany out for undisguised and shameless plunder. We know they have for some time been feverishly preparing freight steamers to carry their goods to other countries when peace is declared. Belgium, France, Italy, and Russia are in a state of disorder and cannot compete with them for some time. This was their avowed object in destroying industrial concerns in Belgium and France.

In 1916 a German officer

from Belgium told Dr Stuermer that they were practically starving Belgium, and the country was only kept alive by the Relief Commission, and that they were attempting to ruin any Belgian industry which might compete with German industry by a systematic removal of machinery to Germany.

The chiefs of industry named by Dr Muehlon—Stinnes and Thyssen, great coal and iron magnates in Westphalia, controlling the richest coal and iron mines in the world, in 1910 putting out eighty-six million tons of coal,—these men are now busily engaged in directing the building and future sailings of ships, ready and eager to begin the new industrial development. With France, Belgium, Italy, and Russia derelict, and eight million tons of British shipping sent to the bottom of the sea by German submarines, such development would be extremely swift; and if Germans are allowed to come to this country without restriction, and the open door for trade accorded them, as proposed by some politicians, we should soon see the same influx of Germans as before the war, and this time they would be established for ever. We cannot repeat too often that we never knew these people as we know them now. It is said that they will not come because they will be uncomfortable, feeling that every one dislikes their presence. This is quite a mistake; they care nothing for the feelings of other people. Unfortunately they would find a large garrison of their own countrymen here, ready to receive them—Germans whom, for some mysterious reason, we have not been able to get rid of, though we have been fighting for our lives with their country, and in that struggle have probably sustained many reverses owing to their presence here.

Mr Davis, the Kaiser's American dentist, who attended him and great numbers of Germans in Berlin for fourteen years, has put on record his opinion of the German character. He writes:

> "The average German is the most selfish individual in the world. He thinks of himself and his own comfort first, last, and all the time. In civil life, just as in a state of war, the German practises the principle that Might makes Right."

He considers that ninety-eight per cent of the nation—workers, socialists, aristocrats, professors, and clericals—were heartily behind the Emperor and eager for war.

When, in December 1916, the Kaiser made a proposal of peace to the Allies, he admitted to Mr Davis that he never intended the Allies to accept the proposal. It was intended to deceive the socialists in the belligerent and neutral countries, and it achieved that object, for they proposed a Peace Conference at Stockholm; but the Allied Governments saw through the Kaiser's plan and refused to allow their delegates to attend.

The Kaiser frequently boasted to Mr Davis that he had main-

tained the peace of Europe for twenty-five years. He maintained peace just long enough to complete his final preparations for the wickedest war that was ever waged.

Mr Davis states that the German people, far from condemning the submarine warfare and the slaughter of innocent women and children, had only one criticism to make of it—it was not comprehensive enough!

"It was absolute folly, if not crime, they said, for Germany to prescribe safety lanes for neutral vessels to use. The whole world should have been declared a war zone, that death and destruction might be dealt whenever and wherever the opportunity offered. That was the all but universal sentiment."

It becomes more and more evident that the great masses of the Germans of all classes and creeds have been heart and soul in favour of the war, and have gloated over its worse atrocities. The evidence is before the world, and it is conclusive.

Major Corbett Smith has put the matter fairly and concisely in his book, 'The Marne and After':

"It is the depravity of a whole nation, rather than the individual excesses of an army, which is responsible for these things; no national army or navy, recruited as it is from the ranks of the nation itself, could possibly be guilty of such obscenity and criminality were it not that the poison had choked their very life-blood."

If there is a chance of this nation being saved, it will not be by misplaced forgiveness of the crimes which have been perpetrated, but it will rather come through the punishment of their rulers, and by showing the people that the systematic corruption which has been going on, as we now know, for many years, has been a false system; and it is only by a long period of affliction that they will gradually realise the fatal path along which their rulers were leading them.

And there must be punishment.

If in the future justice is to reign in this world, the perpetrators of the unspeakable crimes which have been going on for the past four years, and are going on to-day, must pay the penalty. From the Kaiser downwards they must be tried before a Court of the Allies; and the man who, above all others, has caused the death of millions of his fellow-creatures and the maiming and torture of millions more, should assuredly not escape the penalty of death.

The decree is an old one:

> "He that sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed."

And again:

> "Whoso killeth any person, the murderer shall be put to death by the mouth of witnesses."
>
> "The land cannot be cleansed of the blood that is shed therein, but by the blood of him that shed it."

It is surely of the highest importance in this great crisis of the world's history, when white, yellow, and black races

are coming into contact in a way they never did before, that every race should have the great lesson brought before it that deadly crimes, in men however highly placed, will not go unpunished.

For the present we women must demand that Germans shall not be allowed to come to this country. Our terrible sacrifices give us the right to ask this. Our statesmen tell us that the Germans are wild beasts and brutes. We will not allow wild beasts and brutes to come and settle among us and take the places of our dead sons. We have lost a million of our best and bravest men. They have died to preserve us—their mothers, their wives, their sisters—from the awful fate which has overtaken so many of the women of other nations at the hands of those merciless enemies. Shall their splendid and heroic devotion be in vain? No; we women, desolate and broken-hearted as many of us are, must do our part. It is no powerless foe that we are up against. They will be organised for peace as they were for war. They are a disciplined, sober, industrious, efficient nation, malicious and envious of every one greater than themselves, arrogant, pitiless, selfish, brutal, and unchristian, and so powerful that it has taken the combined strength of all the great nations of the world to vanquish them.

We hear even now that some of the German prisoners of war, who will of course be sent back to Germany when peace is declared, are proposing to return to England as soon as opportunity offers. They have proved competent and industrious workmen. They consider our system of agriculture imperfect, and believe that they could make much more out of the land than we do; but we must see to it that when they return to Germany they remain there.

We must not be deceived by "the childlike German smile and the calm gaze of blue eyes." These charming attributes, as Dr Muehlon points out, are the mask which a ferocious and blood-thirsty disposition can, and does, put on.

We are warned from Berlin what the Germans are already thinking ('Daily Mail,' October 17, 1918):—

> "These are hard conditions, they say; but what does it matter? We must have peace. It will take double the work to make up for what has been lost.
>
> "These words sum up what Germany is thinking. She will return to work in the firm conviction that by work she will retrieve her position. She was formidable in war; she will make herself more powerful in peace by the results of hard work."

Even now a number of Germans are employed in this country in places that could be filled by British workers. When our soldiers and sailors come back, and all who have been engaged in war-work are released, if cheap German labour is allowed to flood the country, we shall have

low wages and unemployment again rampant in our midst. It is hardly too much to say that every German employed would mean a British worker idle, and every German article sold would mean a British article unsold.

Who, then, will save us from this threatened and imminent danger? Will our own statesmen, or if they will not listen, will not President Wilson and Mr Gompers help us?

In the event of all men failing us, we women still have two weapons in our hands—the vote, which has been given us because, without our help, this war could not have been won; the second power is that women are the buyers of the nation, and if German goods are forced upon us we can refuse to buy them. We can buy cane sugar from our own colonies and not their beetroot sugar. We can buy stuffs dyed with our own dyes and not their dyes. We can buy glass and toys made in our own country; and things that cannot be made in this country, our colonies, or in the countries of our brave Allies, *we can do without.*

Courage! As Mr Lloyd George has said, "You never know what you can do until you really try, in any business."

THE BENCH AND BAR OF ENGLAND.

BY J. A. STRAHAN.

IV. COUNSEL AND WITNESSES.

It was a case in which there had been considerable swearing. Counsel was addressing the jury, and in doing so was trying to reconcile the evidence of his witnesses with some indisputable facts of the case. Lord Chief Justice Coleridge, who was the judge, grew a little impatient and intervened. "Surely, Mr Smith," he said, "the real explanation of all these contradictions and inconsistencies is" so-and-so. "If we adopt that view, my lord," replied Mr Smith, "it will no doubt explain them; but the difficulty is that to adopt it we must assume that all the witnesses on both sides have been perjuring themselves." "If that, Mr Smith, is the only difficulty," answered Lord Coleridge in his suavest style, "I do not think it is unsurmountable."

The prevalence of perjury in the courts is to-day the chief impediment in the way of a righteous administration of the law; most lawyers will admit this. Most candid lawyers will go further and admit that the prevalence of perjury in the court is partly due to the law itself. Falsehood and law were long close allies. This may surprise the lay reader; but it is a historical and undeniable fact. I will give just one example. A score might easily be given.

In the year of our Lord 1285, Parliament in its wisdom enacted a statute called from its opening words the Statute *De Donis Conditionalibus*. The object of this Act was—as its name indicates—to ensure that the condition on which a gift was made should be observed. The gifts to which it applied were grants of land made to a man "and the heirs of his body," which is the legal way of saying to a man and his descendants. The courts had held that such a gift meant merely a gift on condition the man had descendants; and, accordingly, when children were born to the man, the condition was satisfied and he could deal as he liked with the land. The great lords objected to this interpretation —which in fact was not what was intended—and succeeded in persuading Parliament to enact that such a grant in future should be held to be a grant to the man and to his descendants; and, as such, on the death of the man the land must go to his descendants, and on the failure of his descendants must revert to the grantor. Now the King did not like this statute at all: it tended, and was intended, to preserve the power

of the great lords by keeping their immense estates intact and in their families; and the King's wish was to weaken the great lords' power, which sometimes proved stronger than his own. His Majesty's judges were then his Majesty's most obedient servants, and, accordingly, they made haste to gratify the King's wish by practically repealing the law which they were appointed to enforce. They did this by instituting a system of collusive actions called Fines and Recoveries. The process in these actions was much too technical and intricate to be explained in an article such as this; for our present purpose it is enough to say that it was based on protection extended by the court to open and avowed falsehood. A witness, called technically the vouchee, who, as the judge knew, had never seen the land granted to the defendant and the heirs of his body, boldly told the court that it was he himself who granted it to him and them; and the judge professed himself so deeply impressed by this statement that he would not allow anybody to contradict it. This form of legal lying was so common and profitable that certain gentlemen followed it as a trade. They hung about the precincts of Westminster Hall with a straw in their caps, to indicate their readiness to lie: hence, it is said, the expression, a man of straw. In later times, for speed and convenience, the usher of the court acted as common vouchee, and told all the lies necessary for the proper administration of justice.

The collusive action and the false assumption, supported when necessary by perjury, and protected by the court, is one of the oldest of legal institutions. In Roman Law *in jure cessio* ranks with *mancipium* and *nexum* as dating from before the commencement of legal history. And, queer as it seems, these "legal fictions," as they are politely called, have in early times greatly conduced to the melioration of law and the advancement of justice. But their existence at any time can hardly be said to be calculated to add to the popular conception of the sanctity of an oath in a court of justice; and their continuance till modern times must have tended to blind both lawyers and witnesses to the wickedness of perjury; and we should not forget that Fines and Recoveries continued in full operation till 1833.

That they had this effect upon lawyers is shown in many ways. Thus, till the theories of Bentham upset the practices of the Common Law Courts, the judges and counsel there were so convinced that the least temptation was sufficient to induce a man to commit perjury, that they would not receive the evidence of any one having an interest in the result of an action. Such persons were said not to be credible witnesses; by which was meant that they were so certain to swear what was false that nobody could believe

them. As the persons who know most about the facts of a case are usually the persons most interested in its result, how the courts ever contrived to come to proper decisions is hard to understand. In the Court of Chancery, on the other hand, interested parties were allowed to swear not only as to all they knew, but as to a great deal they did not know. Evidence by affidavit was, and to a certain extent still is—though the practice has greatly altered since the Judicature Acts—not evidence at all. For instance, suitors constantly swore to the accuracy of the arguments of their counsel. The affidavits, in fact, were drafted by counsel, and really consisted of a statement of the case for the party for whom they were drafted. Wise men swore them without reading them. The late Mr Henry Labouchere himself told me that he did. He added, with a nice delicacy of feeling, that to read an affidavit before swearing it was nothing short of a reflection on your legal advisers, since it indicated that you thought you knew better than they did what it was best you should swear. This practice led to the old saying that truth will out, even in an affidavit. I myself remember one extraordinary instance of the recklessness with which affidavits are sometimes made. It was in a dispute over boundaries, and an affidavit of the "oldest inhabitant" was produced in which the deponent swore that the boundaries as delineated in a plan annexed were the boundaries as he remembered them in his youth. When the oldest inhabitant was produced in court for cross-examination, it turned out that he was stone-blind, and had been so since his birth. So much for the sanctity which the courts attached to oaths.

All the same, I think the prevalence of perjury is principally due to the weakness (or strength) of human nature. As I have said in a previous note, most actions, at any rate on the Common Law side, which are really contested, are much in the nature of dog-fights; or, if you like it better, of civil war, which the existence of the courts renders more civil. All the same it is war; and each party's one wish is to smash the other fellow; and he often does not care any more than a German what he does to smash him, provided he does smash him effectively. Occasionally the solicitors on each side share this feeling: when counsel are asked to advise on evidence, the solicitor or his clerk has been known to drop a hint that if any further evidence is necessary it can, in all probability, be obtained. Few solicitors, however, go the length of a Jewish practitioner from Whitechapel who, on delivering to a friend of mine the brief for the defence in an Old Bailey case, said, "If you think the hevidence is not strong enough, Mr Black, just tell me vat you vant. I have some fellers round the corner ready to swear hanythink."

The witnesses now in worst repute are what are called

expert witnesses—that is, witnesses retained and paid to support by their evidence a certain view on a scientific or technical question. We have all heard the old jeer about the three kinds of liars — white liars, black liars, and expert witnesses. Yet the expert witness is often not really a witness at all. He is a trained man who, like counsel, comes forward to maintain for a fee a certain view on an uncertain point, and to give his reasons for that view. I have more than once, when listening to an expert's "evidence," thought it was a pity he was sworn at all: it seemed to me like the old Chancery practice which I have mentioned, of swearing a suitor as to the accuracy of his counsel's argument. And, in fact, they regard themselves, and lawyers to a large extent regard them, as advocates. I remember once when a distinguished scientist was cross-examined as to a different view which had been maintained by him on the same point in another case, answering counsel indignantly, "You seem to forget, sir, that I, like you, was then appearing on the other side.' And the judge seemed to think this reply was reasonable. And so it would have been had the scientific "witness" not been sworn on both occasions to tell "the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth."

Women I have usually found much better witnesses of what they have seen than men. Men reflect on and draw inferences from what they have seen, and are apt to mix in their evidence what they surmise must have happened with what they actually saw happening: women usually tell just what they saw. Their evidence, however, is reliable only so long as their passions are not involved: when love of their husband or children, or hatred of their neighbour, enters into the question, not a word they utter can be trusted. They have no consciences.

One of the most painful incidents I have ever witnessed in a court of justice arose out of the devotion of a mother to her children. The facts of the case were undisputable. A carter had heard a woman screaming for help. He ran to her assistance. He found her lying on her back on the road struggling with a man who was trying his best to cut her throat. The carter closed with the man, and after a fierce struggle in which his hands were badly cut, he succeeded in overpowering the would-be murderer and securing his knife. The woman had to be taken to the hospital. There and afterwards, when giving evidence in the police court, her anger being still hot, she told the story as I have told it, adding that the would-be murderer was her husband. When, a month or two later, her husband was brought up for trial at the Old Bailey charged with attempted murder, the wife's anger had cooled a bit and she had reflected. Put into the witness-

box to support the charge, she calmly swore that it was really the carter who had attempted to cut her throat and her husband who rescued her. The horrified prosecuting counsel asked the judge for leave to cross-examine her on her statement in the hospital and her evidence in the police court. "It is not worth while," replied the judge. "Let the wretched woman leave the box." The poor creature thereupon burst into frantic tears and cried piteously, "Oh, my lord, my lord, don't send 'im to jile! If you do, you send my five pore children to the workus!" I wish writers in the Press would remember this little tale the next time they feel tempted to slate some judge or magistrate for letting a wife-beater off with a fine.

Coming to cross-examination of witnesses, a very experienced Q.C.—now a judge—said to me years ago, "If you wish to lead a profitable or a pleasant life at the Bar you must school yourself to do your duty to your client without regret, without repentance, and without remorse." The truth of this is unquestionable. The barrister who feels pain before or after inflicting it on a witness is not likely to lead a happy life; and the barrister who, to evade such pain, permits a witness to bear false testimony against his client, is just as little likely to lead a profitable one. But the moral point of it is not so clear. Where, in this particular, does the barrister's duty to his client begin and end? Counsel's views on this point differ little, though their practices differ much. They may be summed up thus. The barrister's duty to his client begins with his readiness to inflict on witnesses any pain which is honestly necessary to protect his client; it ends with his refusal to inflict on them any pain which is only necessary to please him. To the honour of the Bar it may be said that the average barrister in practice rarely departs from this rule; the few who constantly permit themselves to be made the instruments of their client's hate soon become marked men who are rarely retained in clean cases.

Bullying and insulting witnesses is another practice now generally disdained. The best cross-examiners seldom resort to it. Yet sometimes, with a particular kind of witness, it is the only effective way of cross-examining. A story is told of a witness who was extremely self-possessed in the box, and who told his story with a readiness and consistency which suggested long and careful preparation. The experienced counsel who was to cross-examine him saw perjury, but he also saw that the only way of letting the jury see it too was by upsetting somehow or other the self-possession of the witness. He noticed that the witness's nose was very red and swollen, and the first question he put to him was, "Mr Jones, do you drink much?" The witness was startled and a

little disconcerted by this unexpected question; but he quickly recovered himself and replied sensibly enough, "That, sir, is *my* business." "I see, I see," said the cross-examiner in a reflective tone; and then asked suddenly, "And have you any other business?" The witness's self-possession disappeared, and before he left the box everybody in court saw that he had been lying.

Reviling witnesses was always more prevalent in Ireland than in England, and Daniel O'Connell seems to have been an adept in the art. Most of his recorded efforts, however, now appear to us mere vulgar abuse. The only one I remember which suggests humour was also very effective. It occurred in a case where the charge against O'Connell's client depended almost entirely on the evidence of a witness who happened to be a Dane. O'Connell secured his verdict by one disparaging sentence. Rising to cross-examine him, he said, "You say you are a Swede?" "No," replied the witness. "What are you then?" demanded O'Connell fiercely. "A Dane," replied the witness. With a shocked look in his face and a shocked tone in his voice, O'Connell turned to the jury (who had, no doubt, vague notions as to the difference between Danes and Swedes) and said, "Gentlemen, you hear the prevaricating scoundrel!" And then he sat down, as if it was useless to ask further questions of such a witness. The jury acquitted.

The most common fault of inexperienced counsel is cross-examining too much. The wise maxim followed by old hands is, "When you have got what you want, sit down." How wise this is, a performance I once beheld in court will show. The late Lord Russell of Killowen—undoubtedly the greatest master of the art of cross-examination of my time—was the judge, and a very junior junior was the cross-examiner. And for a time the youthful counsel cross-examined very well. He forced the witness, who seemed to be a witness of truth, to admit all that he was in a position to admit. He continued, however, after these admissions, to ask further questions. Lord Russell, with a very kindly intention, intervened. "Mr Jones," he said, "you have got all you want from this witness. Do you think it is prudent to ask further questions?" The new hand was too elated with his success to take the old hand's hint. "My lord," he answered, "I have just one or two more questions to put, and then I have done." "Very well," said Lord Russell resignedly. The youthful counsel put a number of questions, which elicited nothing. Lord Russell became visibly uncomfortable. He intervened again. "Mr Jones," he said, "you have got all you want. If you continue putting questions like these, you may get something you don't want." "Just one more, my lord," answered the youthful counsel. He put another question, and received an answer which damned his client's character.

"And now, Mr Jones," said Lord Russell quietly, "you have got it."

For the benefit of "unlearned" readers I may explain that many questions may be put in cross-examination which would not be allowed in examination-in-chief; and the question put by the youthful counsel was one of them.

There still is, undoubtedly, a good deal of abuse of the privilege of cross-examination. This, however, is now found chiefly in the lower courts, and arises partly from the character of advocates who appear there, and partly from the fact that as a rule advocates do not regard the judges in them with the same respect, and the judges have not the same confidence in themselves as judges of the High Court. But, as I said in another part of these rambling recollections, to the public generally a judge is a judge, and a court is a court; and so the sins of the lower courts are visited on the higher ones. The criminal classes discriminate better. One of them, when by any chance he is innocent of the offence with which he is charged, is always most anxious to be sent for trial before the "Red Judge," by which he means a judge of the High Court. He knows that, if he is tried by him, he will not be convicted again merely because he was convicted before. But, as I have said, to the general public a judge is a judge and a court is a court; and there's an end of it.

A romance of the Bar, which may well be true, but which, whether well-founded or only well found, is an apt illustration of this, is told of the same Lord Russell of Killowen. The legend runs that his lordship was one night at the Portland Club intent on playing whist. He found two friends ready and willing to join in the game: the difficulty was over a fourth player. At last a young officer of the Guards was conscripted. On cutting the cards he came out Lord Russell's partner. Before play had well commenced, it became evident that the Guardsman had dined, not perhaps too well, but not certainly too wisely: he flung about his cards recklessly, and only laughed in a silly way when his partner remonstrated. Lord Russell, who, like Mrs Battle, loved the full rigour of the game, soon grew impatient, and at last lost his temper altogether. Flinging his hand on the table, he said angrily, "This is not whist; it is confounded tomfoolery." The young Guardsman stared at the Lord Chief Justice in surprise and irritation for a moment. Then he said, "Keep on your feathers, old cock: there's no harm done." Almost speechless with rage at this insolence the Lord Chief Justice asked in a hoarse voice, "Do you know, sir, whom you are addressing?" "Of course I do," replied the half-tipsy Guardsman; "but remember, my boy, you are not in your blasted old police court now."

V. COUNSEL AND SPEECHES.

"A good speech," Daniel O'Connell used to tell young barristers, "is a good thing, but never forget that the verdict is *the* thing." O'Connell himself, though as well qualified as any man ever was to make a good speech when a good speech was needed, never in practice forgot his own precept. His mind was always fixed on the verdict, and, according to the stories told of him, he was not over-scrupulous as to the way in which he got it — not even disdaining occasionally to get it by a trick. It is told of him, for instance, that he did this once when defending in a case of agrarian murder. The chief evidence for the prosecution was that of the bailiff of the murdered landlord. This witness produced a hat which, he swore, he saw fall from the head of the masked murderer as he ran away, and which he and several other witnesses identified as a hat belonging to the prisoner. In cross-examining the witness, O'Connell, with the hat in his hand, said—

"You saw this hat fall from the murderer's head?"

"I did," answered the bailiff.

"And you immediately picked it up?"

"I did."

O'Connell looked closely at the inside of the hat.

"And I suppose you examined it outside and in?" he then asked.

"I did."

Still looking intently at the inside of the hat, O'Connell went on—

"And I suppose you read on the lining?" and O'Connell, appearing to read from the hat, spelt out the prisoner's name.

The witness, assuming he was reading, answered—

"I did."

"My lord," said O'Connell, "I submit the case is ended. There is no name whatever in the hat."

If O'Connell never forgot in practice that the verdict was the thing, not a few of the counsel of his time appear to have done so. His was the age of lawyer orators. All the Common Law barristers, or nearly all, seemed more anxious to win reputations for themselves than to win cases for their clients, and as a consequence many of those who were most renowned as speech-makers were very far from being equally renowned as verdict-getters. It is told that at the time when Brougham and Pollock divided the lead of the Northern Circuit between them, a junior counsel, going the circuit for the first time, got into conversation, at the end of the assizes at York, with a juryman who had served throughout them. He asked the juryman which of the two leaders he considered the greater advocate. "Oh," answered the juryman offhand,

"there's no comparison: Brougham is head and shoulders above Pollock."

"But," objected the young barrister, "you have been all through finding verdicts for Pollock."

"Ah, that was his luck," answered the juryman. "You see it so happened that he was always on the right side."

People generally think that lawyers are by nature a very loquacious set. That is too often true enough, especially when they are paid by the length of their speeches, as they are under the system of daily "refreshers," as they are called. But when they are not paid for their speeches, they are, of all professional men, the least addicted to oratory. At their festive gatherings in London at the Inns of Court, or in the provinces at circuit or sessions messes, speech-making is firmly forbidden. When loyalty requires that the King's health should be drunk, it is proposed in Hall by the treasurer, on circuit by the leader or the junior—the practice differs on different circuits—in the briefest way. He rises to his feet, raises his glass, and says, "The King." The other counsel rise to their feet, repeat "The King," and drain their glasses. When the judges are entertained by the circuit mess—as they usually are once, at least, on each assizes—the guests' health is proposed in the same simple fashion.

Of course there are occasional aberrations from this recognised practice. It is said that when the late Sir Frank Lockwood was junior on the North-East Circuit, he got into trouble through departing from it. The assize judges were Mr Justice Lush and Mr Justice Shee; they were the guests of the mess, and it was his duty to propose their health. He did not do so in the lawful fashion; but instead he, in his wilful way, asked the mess to drink to wine and women, coupling the toast with the names of Mr Justice Lush and Mr Justice Shee.

But Lockwood was an irresponsible sort of being, born to get into trouble as the sparks fly upward. According to all accounts, in his very first case, he was nearly being committed for contempt of court for giving a conscientious, unimaginative Chancery judge an accurate but unexpected answer. The case turned on the interpretation of an ill-drawn will. Only two views of its meaning were possible, and there were half a dozen or more persons interested in maintaining each view of the meaning. Instead of all the claimants interested in each reading joining together and briefing one counsel to represent them, each of the claimants chose—or his solicitor chose for him—to be represented separately, as too often is the case when the costs are paid not by the client but by the estate. Young Lockwood received one of the many briefs. It was

marked modestly enough with two guineas for the hearing and one for consultation—that is, it was what is known technically as a "two and oner." When the case came on for hearing, the judge was shocked at the number of counsel engaged, where only two were necessary.

"How many are there of you?" he asked angrily. "I have counted twelve; is that all?"

"No, my lord," answered Lockwood in a meek way, "I appear for So-and-so."

"And what did you come here for?" demanded the outraged judge.

Lockwood lifted his brief, glanced at the back of it, and answered briskly—

"For two and one, my lord; just for two and one."

To a certain extent, however, the public are probably right in regarding counsel as sometimes unduly loquacious. As I have said, the system of feeing counsel with daily refreshers so long as the hearing continues puts a temptation in the way of counsel to lengthen their speeches, which it is to be feared some of them do not resist as firmly as they should. At any rate I have heard, especially of late and especially on the Chancery side, complaints, whether well-founded or not I do not know, about cases which might have been disposed of in days being prolonged over weeks. In justice, however, to the Bar, it should be remembered that not infrequently a long speech is due to the anxiety of counsel to do everything possible for their client. Some "fighting" counsel are notorious for the length of speeches they make in losing cases. The late Mr Oswald was one of these. I remember listening to him in an appeal where the court was obviously against him. If he stated the argument in favour of his client once, he stated it in different forms half a dozen times. The judges, and especially Lord Esher, showed openly their weariness; but Oswald went on without pause and without pity. At last he raised a new point. One of the Lords Justices protested. "Now, Mr Oswald," he said, "you know you said nothing about this in the court below." "No, my lord," answered Oswald; "but that was because before I reached it the judge stopped me." "Stopped you!" exclaimed Lord Esher in tones of amazed incredulity. Then after a moment's reflection his lordship leant over the bench and asked Oswald in a confidential stage whisper, "Tell me: how did he do it?" Oswald was for a moment taken aback. Quickly pulling himself together, he answered bitterly, "By leading me to believe, my lord, that he was with me."

If forensic oratory has not become more terse of late, it has certainly become less florid. Nowadays, when a barrister indulges in the sublime and beautiful, it is because there is nothing else to be done, and he wishes to give his client what is known at the Bar as a good funeral. When this is the case, judges understand his position and

make allowances for it. When it is not the case, judges are apt to get annoyed. What they want is a clear and plain exposition of the arguments and evidence on which the advocate relies; and most juries now look for that too. It was very different with many counsel even in my young days. The old tradition, to which I have before referred, that counsel were entitled to treat their cases as opportunities for showing their own abilities as much as for winning their clients' cases, still lingered, more especially among defending counsel at the Old Bailey. The Old Bailey Bar then was much more distinct from the ordinary Common Law Bar than it is now. There are still counsel there and elsewhere who practise only in criminal courts; but these are few and far between: the bulk of Old Bailey practitioners who now practise in criminal courts alone are usually beginners who are trying to make their way by the "Rope Walk" to other courts; and most of them who attain any success usually make it. But formerly the Old Bailey Bar were a genus by themselves: they had their own way of life, their own kind of work, their own mode of doing it, their own knowledge or want of knowledge of law, their own style of oratory. That style of oratory was high-flown in the extreme. Now the practitioner at the Old Bailey addresses the jury in the same plain and matter-of-fact manner as the counsel practising at country sessions or on circuit. If he attempts to do otherwise he is liable to get into the bad graces of the judge.

One or two of the old school survived till very lately. A story is told of about the last of them who not long ago passed away to a well-earned rest amidst the regrets of his brethren at the Bar. I may repeat it, as it illustrates at once the style of the ancient Old Bailey man and the intolerance of it of the modern High Court judge. This gentleman had severely cross-examined one of the leading witnesses for the prosecution, and when he came to address the jury he commented equally severely on the witness's evidence. At last he reached his climax. "Gentlemen of the jury," he said in a low, deep, impressive, and most solemn voice, "the Scriptures tell us that Pontius Pilate wrote on the outward and invulnerable wall of mighty Nineveh these terrible and tragic words, Mene, mene, tekel, upharsin, which, being interpreted, mean ——" "The Scriptures," the judge snapped in angrily, "don't tell us that Pontius Pilate wrote any such words on any wall anywhere." Counsel stared for a moment at the judge, indignant and amazed. Then he replied with great dignity, "My lord, the Scriptures certainly tell us that somebody wrote these words on some wall somewhere; and whoever the writer and wherever the wall, the principle is the same."

I have spoken of the ancient

Old Bailey man's knowledge or want of knowledge of law. Nowadays his knowledge of law is, as a rule, about as deep as that of the ordinary Common Law junior. Even in my young days it was different. I well remember being startled by a question put to me by one of the leading lights of the Old Bailey. He was appearing in a libel case, and had been instructed by his solicitor to cite some cases to the court; and the question he put to me was how he was to give the references to them. I remember also when a judge, himself not very deeply learned—the more superficial a judge's learning is the more it shows—said to another of them, in his mincing way, "Well, Mr ——, all I can say is that on this point of law you and the learned Sir William Blackstone happen to differ," the counsel learned in the law responded calmly, "I can't say, my lord, I have heard before of Sir William Blackstone, so I suppose I may assume he is an Irish or Colonial judge, and if that is so I submit his decision is not binding on this court." But possibly the best instance of a criminal barrister's ignorance of law comes from Ireland, where there is no criminal Bar.

Though there is no criminal Bar in Ireland, there are barristers there who never obtain anything but criminal briefs. The system of prosecution in criminal cases is different in Ireland from what it is in England. At the Assizes there, private and county prosecutions are unknown. All prosecutions are what are there called Crown prosecutions, and what would be called in England Treasury prosecutions, with this difference that they are conducted (as Treasury prosecutions are in England at the Old Bailey but not on circuit) by permanent Treasury counsel. The barristers who never obtain anything but criminal briefs in Ireland are often junior Treasury prosecutors, and it is respecting one of these that the incident I refer to is related. It was told me, if I remember rightly, by my friend Mr Justice Dodd, P.C., of the Irish Bench; but it would not be fair to blame him with my version of it: I tell it as I recollect it after many years. The prosecuting counsel had called evidence to prove that the prisoner had committed a very serious offence. On the completion of his case the defending counsel —Mr Andrew Porter, who afterwards filled for many years the office of Master of the Rolls with high distinction —entered into an elaborate examination of the law, with the object of showing that, admitting the prisoner had done everything alleged against him, yet that would not make him guilty of the crime charged. Lord Chief Baron Palles, who was the judge, and who dearly loved a nice point of law and a good legal argument, listened to the learned, acute, and discriminating reasoning of Mr Porter with unconcealed pleasure. When the argument was finished the Chief Baron turned to the prosecuting counsel and said with a smile, "Well now,

Mr ——, what have you to say to that?" The poor prosecuting counsel, who understood not a word of Mr Porter's argument, fumbled for a moment with his papers. Then he said indignantly, "Say to it, my lord, say to it? Why, it's blethers, it's all blethers! For goodness sake let us get on with the case."

Most counsel in large practice develop tricks of manner or memory which sometimes prove inconvenient to their clients or themselves. I think it is Addison who, in one of his 'Spectator' papers, tells of the habit of a leading serjeant-at-law of his time of fingering a button of his coat while he was addressing the court. A client with a sense of humour, but with no other sense worth mentioning, thought it would be a good joke to cut off this button just before the serjeant began his argument in his case. He cut it off, and the result was that he had his jest and his opponent had his estate. The late Lord Russell of Killowen was a slave to snuff. I remember once in a very heavy case, after he had commenced his opening speech, he felt in his waistcoat pocket for his snuffbox. When he failed to find it he was visibly disconcerted. He went on with his speech; but, to the surprise of those who knew his usual clarity and readiness and did not know his want, it was confused and halting. At length he could stand it no longer, so stooping to the well of the court, he whispered to his solicitor. The solicitor instantly rose and left the court. In a few minutes he returned and handed a small packet of snuff to the great advocate. The latter hastily took a long pinch, and Sir Charles was himself again.

A very embarrassing but very common trick of memory among advocates is forgetfulness of names. Many, whose recollection of the facts and principles in innumerable cases is perfect, cannot for the life of them remember the names of these cases. Counsel so troubled never enter court without a list of the names of all conceivable cases bearing on points that may arise during the hearing written in a very legible hand, and kept handy for immediate reference. This device is also adopted to remind counsel of the names of the parties and witnesses in cases turning on questions of fact; but it proves less useful then, since counsel in the fervour of their addresses to the jury are apt to forget not merely the names but the list itself. This once happened to a counsel who afterwards occupied a seat on the Bench. He was addressing a jury in perfervid tones, and as he grew warmer and warmer the names of the plaintiff and defendant got more and more mixed. At length the judge intervened. "Mr Attorney," he said in a pathetic voice, "so long as you consistently called the plaintiff, whose name is Jones, by the name of Smith, and the defendant, whose name is Smith, by the name of Jones, the jury and I could follow you; but now that you have introduced the name of Robinson without

indicating in any way whether you mean it to refer to the plaintiff or to the defendant, or to both indifferently, we are beginning to get bothered a bit."

Nothing I have said must be taken as suggesting that the eloquence of the Bar has in the least degree lost its effectiveness. It has changed its character, but it is still as powerful as ever it was, not merely with judges and juries but on the platform and in Parliament. Perhaps it would not be going too far to suggest that in Parliament it is more successful than it has ever been in the past, and that this was one of the main causes of the recent outcry against lawyer politicians. And now, as in the past, it is not always the counsel who are most successful with juries who are most successful in the House. From Lord Erskine to Lord Russell of Killowen many great advocates, who stood in the very first rank as verdict-getters and forensic orators, have been more or less failures in Parliament; while counsel, famed more for their knowledge of law and their influence over the minds of judges—such as Selborne and Cairns—have attained foremost places in parliamentary debate. That is the case to-day. Of the many lawyers in the Lords and Commons who hold the ear of their House, most are at this moment Chancery men who never addressed a jury in their lives, or Common Law men whose practice is of that severer kind which makes its owner less familiar with popular tribunals than with Courts of Appeal and the Privy Council.

VI. COUNSEL AND STUDENTS

Until lately a law student did not necessarily mean a person studying the law. In the good old days of the eighteenth century and after men did not read their way to the Bar: they ate it. Once they had paid their fees for admission to an Inn of Court all they had to do to qualify for call to the Bar was to keep twelve terms. By keeping a term is meant eating a certain number of dinners in the hall of your Inn. There are four terms in each year; and so, if you ate the regulation number of dinners in each term for three years, you had fulfilled all the conditions which qualified you for call, and enabled your Inn to declare to the world that you were a fit and proper person to reveal to it the law and receive from it the profits.

I think it must have been some recollection of this great notion which influenced the mind of an ancient barrister whom I happened to meet at mess in Middle Temple Hall when I was keeping my first term, now nearly forty years ago. He, with the reverence due to youth, was pointing out to me the way I should go if I wanted to arrive at the woolsack. I chanced to say something about brains.

"Brains!" exclaimed the old gentleman in amazement. "Brains be blowed! It isn't brains, my lad, that bring success at the Bar: it is—stomach!" It is just possible my kind instructor was using the phrase in the same sense as did good Queen Bess when she told her troops at Tilbury that she had the stomach of a king; and in that case, after long experience, I am inclined to think that he was not far wrong; but from some other remarks which he made that night, and especially from the care with which he drew my attention to the figures of the Benchers as they left the hall, I gathered at the time that he referred to the assimilative organs in the most vulgar form and sense of the expression; and in that case all I can say is that if he was right it is not strange I never reached the goal, for I set out on the road but poorly equipped in that particular for such a long and toilsome journey.

Of course this system of law students marching, like Napoleon's armies, on their stomachs to their objective, was not deliberately instituted by the Inns of Court. Like the British Constitution it grew, and it grew just about the time the British Constitution, as we now know it, was growing. In "the spacious days of great Elizabeth" legal education was highly and carefully organised. John Stow tells us that there were then nine Inns of Chancery besides the four Inns of Court, and young students came to the Inns of Chancery "sometimes from one of the universities, and sometimes immediately from grammar schools; and there, having spent some time in studying upon the first elements and grounds of the law, and having performed the exercise of their own houses (called Boltas Mootes, and putting of cases), they proceed to be admitted, and become students in some of the four houses or inns of court, where, continuing the space of seven years or thereabouts, they frequent readings, meetings, boltings, and other learned exercises, whereby growing ripe in the knowledge of the laws, and approved withal to be of honest conversation, they are either, by the general consent of the benchers or readers, being of the most ancient, grave, and judicial men of every inn of the court, or by special privilege of the present reader, there selected and called to the degree of utter barristers, and so enabled to be common counsellors, and to practise the law, both in their chambers and at the bar." At a time when law books and reports of cases were not so plentiful as they are now, a more practical and thorough system of legal education could not be imagined than this system of teaching by lectures, discussions of cases, and other "learned exercises." We will see shortly what these learned exercises became two centuries later.

It may just be noted in passing that it was this same time of the Tudors and early

Stuarts which witnessed the two greatest and most characteristic achievements of English lawyers: I mean the law of trusts and the doctrine of valuable consideration. Both originated in the religious view—the early Chancellors were all clerics—that it is a sin to break a confidence reposed in you, and if you do break it you must be compelled to purge your conscience by giving up any benefit you may have gained by it. The Equity lawyers, who were always more ecclesiastical than their Common Law brothers, continued and continue to grant relief on this principle in the case of trusts; but the Common Law, in the case of contracts, broke in time altogether away from it, and established the very mundane principle that where you made a promise for value given, then, confidence or no confidence, you must keep it, and, if you do not, you must compensate the person to whom it was made for any loss resulting — the broadest and most simple and most sensible principle on which the law of contract ever was based.

This little lecture on law is by the way. The road we are travelling is towards an explanation of how the Elizabethan system of legal education by teaching turned into the Georgian system of legal education by dining. In Elizabeth's time dining did accompany teaching, just as in the universities Commons were served in the Halls of the Inns for the students attending the Reader's lectures and discussions and the Readers themselves. But during the period following the Revolution—that period which Disraeli was fond of describing as England's Venetian age, an age of sinecures, pluralities, and somnolence—the dinners were continued but the teaching ceased. Each Inn appointed its two Readers each year; but they delivered no lectures and held no bolts. "Learned exercises" were continued; but they were scarcely calculated greatly to advance or display the student's knowledge of law. This is what they consisted of: Before he was called the student who had eaten the regulation number of dinners and paid the regulation number of pounds, was called before the Bench. A paper was put into his hand by an official of the Inn. The student read from the paper, "I say that the widow shall have her dower." This sentence convinced the Bench so completely of the student's learning that he was not allowed to read any more. The senior Bencher bowed to the student, the student bowed to the Bench and retired; the "learned exercise" was over, and the performer was declared a fit and proper person to be admitted to practise the law, of which he had just shown to the satisfaction of his teachers his thorough knowledge.

In other words, the Inns of Court had ceased entirely to be what they originally were—schools of law. If any student keeping commons in their Halls thought that before he became a lawyer he should

learn a little law, he had to find instruction where he could. The usual way was to read in a barrister's chambers. You paid a hundred guineas a year to a special pleader or a conveyancer, and in consideration of this were permitted to read his papers and see how he did his work. But you were entitled to no personal attention from the pleader or conveyancer, and in practice seldom got any. You had to pick up your learning from his papers which were brought by his clerk to the pupils' room before delivery to the client; and a long, dull, and dreary job this picking up must have been.

The Reform Bill of 1832 proved in its result an awakening to many of the somnolent public bodies. Parliament began to inquire whether these were performing the duties for which they existed. The Inns of Court were the subject of two such inquiries; and the Committees of the House which made them intimated pretty clearly that in their opinion legal education by dinner was not satisfactory. It was suggested that law should be taught again, and that men should not be admitted to practise at the Bar until they had passed an examination in at any rate the elements of law. There was, however, considerable difference of opinion as to the expediency of an examination for call, and for a time a middle course was followed: to be called, a student had to produce either a certificate of having passed the examination or a certificate of having read in a barrister's chambers.

For those "dandies and men about town," to quote Thackeray's words, "who wished for some reason to be barristers of seven years' standing," the usual course was to produce the certificate of having read in chambers. It was easier to do this than to produce the certificate of having passed the examination, because to get the latter you had to pass the examination, but to get the former you had not to read in chambers: there were always plenty of benevolent barristers who, if you paid your money for reading in their chambers, let you take your choice whether you read in them or not. In fact, as I heard Lord Cozens Hardy, M.R., once tell, it was a meeting between Sir Richard Bethel—who was then Chairman of the Council of Legal Education—and one of these benevolent barristers that led to a change. The benevolent one had given a certificate to a young student with whom Bethel was slightly acquainted. Bethel asked him what he thought of him? The gentleman reflected, and then said he had hardly formed any opinion, as he remembered meeting him only once, and that was at the Derby. So Bethel made it his business to get established a compulsory examination before call for all candidates for the Bar.

In order not to be misled by this statement, two qualifications of it should be borne in mind. In the first place, some conscientious counsel refused to give certificates of having read

in chambers to students who had in fact not done so. But even here, if tradition is to be trusted, counsel was not really unkind. It is told that when a student applied once for a certificate, the barrister refused it on the ground that his clerk's journal showed that the student had during the whole year only on two occasions made his appearance at chambers. "Ah, but I learned a lot," argued the student. "What was it?" asked the barrister severely. "Well, the first time I read a long opinion of yours on the liabilities of executors," said the student. "Well, what did I say?" asked the barrister. "I don't exactly remember," replied the student; "but I do remember that when I had finished reading it I said to myself, well, I'm blest if I'll ever be an executor." "And what did you learn the next time?" asked the barrister. "Well, I read a long opinion of yours on the liabilities of trustees." "And what did I say?" "Well, I don't exactly remember," replied the student; "but I do remember when I had finished reading it I said to myself, well, I'm d——d if I'll ever be a trustee." "Sir," said the barrister earnestly, "you shall have your certificate. Your answers show that you have acquired a sound and discriminating knowledge of the principles of Equity, which, whether you become a barrister or not, will be of the greatest value to you throughout the rest of your life."

And the second qualification to be remembered is that at first the compulsory examination was not over severe, though probably it never was quite so easy to pass it as a story that is told would indicate. A student, it is said, who to the knowledge of all his friends had never read anything of the Law of Real Property, contrived to pass in it. Some one pressed the examiner for an explanation, and he got it. "My rule," said the examiner, "is to pass a man who gets fifty per cent of full marks. Well, I asked him two questions. The first was, What is the Rule in Shelley's Case? He answered that it had something to do with poetry. Well, that was wrong. Then I asked him, What is a contingent remainder? He answered that he was sure he didn't know. Well, that was right, and so I passed him."

These silver days of the slight knowledge of law, like the golden day of the no knowledge at all, as a qualification for call, are now past for ever. At last a course of study has been set, the mastering of which keeps the student busy during the three years he is keeping term; and an examination has to be passed which ensures that a man called to the Bar has a sound general knowledge of both Common Law and Equity. Neither is the industrious student left to find his way as best he can to such knowledge: Readers and Assistant Readers have been appointed in every branch of the subject, whose duty it is, by expositions and advice, to give him the aid that every beginner needs.

The object to be attained by

appointing these guides could not be better stated than it was by Lord Brougham in his evidence before one of the inquiring Committees. Students of law would, he said, "learn law better, and at all events they would learn it easier, and save themselves a great deal of fruitless labour in the acquisition, if they had the benefit of a learned and skilful professor, accustomed to teach." Unfortunately, in appointing teachers the Council of Legal Education, which was in 1852 established by the four Inns of Court to supervise the instruction of their students, at first seemed to overlook the last words. It assumed that anybody who knew law could teach law, and not infrequently appointed elderly Q.C.'s as teachers, who never before in their lives had attempted to teach anybody anything. When I was a student the teaching staff consisted of my friend Mr James Bryce (now Viscount Bryce, O.M.) in Roman Law; Mr Frederic Harrison, the distinguished publicist, in Jurisprudence; Mr John D. Mayne in Common Law; Mr Ellis, Q.C., afterwards a county court judge, in Equity; and Mr Barber, K.C., also afterwards a county court judge, in Real Property. I can say without hesitation that there were only two of these from whose instruction I derived benefit—Bryce and Mayne; and Bryce was a trained university teacher—he was then, and for years before had been, Regius Professor of Civil Law at Oxford—and Mayne had had, I believe, practical experience of teaching in India; but, at any rate, he had long practised at home on Indian Appeals, and one cannot conceive a better training for a teacher of law to beginners than years spent in expounding to the Most Honourable Privy Council the elements of Hindu and Mahomedan Jurisprudence. As for Ellis and Barber, they lectured to their dazed listeners as if these poor youths were a Bench of judges learned in the law. But Mr Harrison was to me the greatest disappointment. His delivery made it very difficult to follow what he said; but from what I was able to follow it seemed to me this did not matter much. His object, or at least what he accomplished, was to make the simple difficult and the obvious obscure. Only one sentence of his remains in my memory. He had stated some elementary self-evident proposition and was beginning to "explain" it. He said: "This proposition always puzzles students, and is sometimes not clearly understood even by men of sense."

This practice of putting in old men to do new jobs has now been long abandoned. For years past young men, if possible with some experience of university teaching, have been chosen. If they "make good" they are retained, and when occasion offers, promoted; if they fail they are asked to retire. It would be unbecoming in me to say anything either in commendation or in criticism of the qualifications of any of these Readers. This result, however, may be noted. Before

the war desolated our seats of learning the difficulty was to find accommodation for the swarms of students who wished to attend the lectures. Among those students every race within the Empire was represented: white and black, brown and yellow, coming from all climates and from the uttermost corners of the earth to study the laws of England. The Inns of Court had become, and, once the war is over, should become again even in a greater degree, the nearest approach yet made to an Imperial School of Law.

There has been a good deal of ill-informed criticism of the education at the Inns of Court. One point made is that the reason of the large attendance of students at the lectures was because the lecturers were also the examiners. As a matter of fact, half the lecturers did not examine, and more than half the examiners did not lecture; and every student had to pass in papers which were neither set nor read by the lecturers. Another baseless objection is that the lecturers are young men thinking only of getting into practice, who treat their appointments merely as a means of making a little money until practice comes. This objection is based on the fact already noted, that the Council now fills vacancies not with old but with young men. What the critics forget is that it continues in office young men who prove their fitness until they become old. Of the present lecturers, more than half have been teaching under the Council for the last wenty years, and many of them were teaching at the Universities before they were appointed by the Council. It is true they practise, and it is a good thing too. What the Council has succeeded in creating is a staff of legal teachers much the same as the staff of medical teachers of a hospital, who are also practitioners of what they teach. It is hardly too much to hope that if the Inns of Court continue their work on these lines, they will yet create a school of practical law such as has not existed in England since the great age of Elizabeth.

No doubt the school is at present capable of improvement, and no doubt it will be in time improved. This is not the season, however, when its class-rooms are almost denuded of students, to begin reforms. I may, however, be allowed to suggest two which I hope will be considered when better times come. One is that a building with proper offices and lecture-rooms should be provided for the work. At present the classes are moved from Inn to Inn from term to term, and the only permanent home of the school are two sets of chambers up three pairs of stairs. Another is that more tutorial teaching should be provided. At present it is true there is a director of legal studies who can be consulted by the students as to their reading. But one such person is not enough. Roughly, the course for the Bar consists of three groups of subjects—Common Law, Evidence, and Pleading; Equity, Real Property, and Conveyancing; and Roman

Law, Constitutional Law, and Legal History—not to mention special subjects like Indian and Dutch Law. It would, in my opinion, be of infinite benefit to many students if one of the lecturers in each of these groups was appointed to attend at the lecture-rooms between certain hours each day of the educational terms, not only to advise students as to their reading, but to help them to surmount difficulties in their reading: with classes numbering from one hundred to one hundred and fifty men, it is clear a lecturer can give no such assistance to each student personally. However, the classes do not number so many students by a long way now, and till they do the matter is of small importance.

I have mentioned examinations, and when examinations are mentioned it is a sort of custom to cite what are called "howlers" from answers given in them. These seem to be regarded by the public as funny. As a rule, the only thing funny about them is that the public can see any fun in them. In my time I have read thousands of answers from thousands of students both at the Inns of Court and at various Universities, and my experience is that the worse the answer the duller it is, which is natural, seeing that generally the worse the answer the stupider the student. I can now remember only one answer which was at once bad and good; and to this moment I am not sure that the fellow who gave it was not having a joke at my expense. It was at a class examination. I had been lecturing on the Jurisdiction of the Court of Chancery. The gist of my lecture was as follows: The Court of Chancery was called a Court of Conscience because, unlike a Court of Law, it intervened not so much to protect a plaintiff from wrongdoing as to prevent the defendant from soiling his conscience by doing wrong; this was a religious more than a civil principle, and its adoption was due to the fact that all the earlier Chancellors were ecclesiastics; and the way it was enforced was by the court issuing an order to compel the defendant to do himself what a man of conscience would do, and if he disobeyed the order by imprisoning him for contempt of court; this process against the defendant personally gave rise to the maxim Equity acts *in personam*. The question I set was, Why was the Court of Chancery called a Court of Conscience? and the answer I received was as follows: "The Court of Chancery was called a Court of Conscience because it intervened to compel the defendant to soil his conscience; and it acted in this way because the early Chancellors were all ecclesiastics. Hence the maxim that Equity acts *in parsonam*."

(To be continued.)

"GREEN BALLS."

BY PAUL BEWSHER.

I.

THE DAWN PATROL.

"Sometimes I fly at dawn above the sea,
Where, underneath, the restless waters flow,
Silver and cold and slow . . ."

—*The Dawn Patrol.*

SOMEBODY shakes me by my shoulder, and I wake to the consciousness of a dark room and a determined steward.

"Four o'clock, sir!"

I get out of my warm bed, very unwillingly, and dress lightly in a white cricket shirt, grey flannel trousers, and a blue pea-jacket and a muffler, and go out of the hut to the garage. Dawn is just breaking. The sky is still bright with stars, and a moon is drowsily hanging like a golden gong in the south-west. The air is extraordinarily fresh and cold, and soon I am tearing joyfully through it on a clamorous motor-bicycle. Down the road through the marshes I rush on my mile-long ride to the sheds.

Outside the office I dismount and go inside the bare room, with its charts and its long table, and meet the sleepy-eyed duty-officer, who is wearing "gum-boots" and an overcoat over his pyjamas, and is obviously looking forward to settling down once more to sleep. The duty-pilot comes in after him, with a flying-cap on his head, and a muffler round his neck, and a pair of gloves in his hand. A welcome cup of tea is brought in by a massive bluejacket, and then I snatch up a life-belt, a pair of binoculars, the Thermos flask and Malted Milk tablets, my charts, and a few odd necessaries, and, accompanied by the pilot, I go over to the slipway, at the end of which floats the seaplane, with its wide white wings reflecting the pale light of dawn. A group of men in great rubber boots stand in the water holding the wings.

When I get to the edge of the water, I climb on to the back of one, and he wades out into the water until I can stand on the float and climb up into a seat in front of the pilot.

It is an ample seat—wide enough for three people—and I sit on a soft cushion over a petrol-tank. The wireless sets, in varnished wooden boxes, are fixed in position in front of me. My machine-gun is ready to be fixed at a moment's notice, and I settle myself into the seat and put down my various impedimenta and wait for the start.

The pilot in the back seat examines his instruments, and soon there is a hissing noise as he turns on the compressed air. The propeller in front of me moves round slowly. The engine fires and begins to start with a roaring noise.

The propeller vanishes as it gathers speed, and I can see straight ahead with an uninterrupted view.

The engine is tested with men hanging on to the wings. The pilot waves his hand, the men leave go, and we begin to move out across the wide harbour with its grey battleships and lean destroyers, and merchant ships painted in strange patches.

The moon is growing paler now, and nearly all the stars have vanished before the silver of the dawn. On our right is the outline of a red-roofed harbour town, quiet and asleep. On the left are the great sheds of the station, and the low green hills beyond. We face the wind. The engine recommences its roar, and the seaplane begins to move quickly across the water with a steady noise. Faster and faster it rushes on, then begins to leap from wave-top to wave-top until we rise into the air, and move at a rushing pace just over the pale oily water.

The roar of the motor is soon registered no more by my ear, lulled by its perpetuity. I find it glorious to be winging my way into the heart of the dawn over the silver water. Above a long floating boom we pass, and turn east towards the wide misty level of the sea. Ahead of me in the haze burns a red-eyed sun, looking hot and only half awake.

Far to my left and far to my right is a faint grey coast-line as we move up the widening estuary. I bring out a little blue-covered note-book, and sharpen a pencil and prepare to record the name, nationality, and type of every ship, with a brief note of its cargo, course, and characteristics.

Through the haze suddenly appears a little group of ships anchored round a stout red lightship, with its great lantern at the top of the mast and the cheery white-painted name on its side.

My pencil is very busy as we sweep round in circles, while I make notes of the different types of ships. Neutral ships being luridly decorated with painted colours and their names in enormous white letters, are easily recorded. It is somehow very dramatic to see a great steamer loom through the mist, and to read *Jan Petersen - Norge* or *Hector - Sverige* on its black sides as it sweeps majestically under the seaplane, its churning propeller leaving a wide lane of white bubbling foam.

It gives such a splendid idea of far-flung commerce — of nation linked up with nation by these loaded ships. You realise how the forests of Scandinavia have been despoiled to fill these decks with the towering piles of clean fair wood. There is something in the passing of the great ship proclaiming its nationality and origin in such bold characters that

seems like the triumphant note of an organ.

Yet these signs are the heartfelt appeal of an apprehensive and vulnerable vessel, hoping against hope that the vivid stripes of colour and the proclamation of nationality will protect it from the cruel, greedy submarine.

Then we leave the little crowd of anchored ships below and sail on into the mist to the lonelier levels of the sea. Now and then we overtake some heavily-laden freighter, low in the water, pounding outwards on its hazardous journey, its plain unlettered sides showing that it is a vessel of the Allies.

In front of me I wind a little handle. This causes the wireless set to connect with the engine, and the little motor revolves rapidly. I press the brass key, and a blue spark spits and splutters inside one of the boxes. Then I call up the seaplane station far behind me in the mist and record my position. Putting the telephone-receiver over my ears, I hear above the roar of our engines the sharp staccato signals of some warship below us on the grey sea. As I move a lever round a series of studs I hear it more clearly or more faintly as I get more or less in "tune" with it. Then I remove the receiver, having tested the wireless instruments and found them correct, and once more look over the side to the chilly sea.

We fly over three or four little trawlers steaming slowly along, dredging the waterway for mines. Then over two leaning masts of some wreck, which pierce the water like thin lances. Next we pass above a Belgian relief ship, advertising its nature by means of innumerable placards and flags and colours, which are yet not sufficient to keep it immune from the Germans and their unreliable promises. Now it is a familiar line of mud-hoppers carrying a load of dredged mud to some deep dumping-ground. Now over a couple of lean grey torpedo-boats, nosing everywhere, carefully and suspiciously, protecting the Channels.

So at times over ever-varying craft, and at times over grey wet loneliness, we travel on in our long patrol, until at last the squat red shape of a lightship appears through the haze, and we know that we have reached the limit of our outward journey. We sweep low over the isolated vessel, wave our hands to the men on board, and start to return home by a different route, and roar on over mile after mile of water glittering in the sun, which is slowly dissipating the mist of early morning.

Soon a group of ships are met steaming along towards us, and I recognise the vessels which I had seen anchored together waiting for the dawn. They are left behind us, and we regain the land from which we started. Over the sleeping seaport town we pass, and can see its red and brown roofs lit by the sun, and its empty

streets. Then we sweep over the harbour, the pilot turns the machine round to face the wind, and the roar of the engine stops. We begin to glide down slowly, drawing nearer and nearer to the water. Just above the surface of the glittering waves we rush, touch it with a long splash, and slowly pull up and stop, floating once more in the harbour. The engines roar out again, and we "taxi" quickly over the little waves in long even jolts towards the slipway, where the men are waiting to help us ashore. When we are alongside they walk out to us in their waterproof thigh-boots and carry me on to the slipway.

I walk quickly through the hangars across the grass-covered lawn to the office, and sitting down at a typewriter begin to transcribe at once the notes I have written in my little blue book.

6.40. British cargo steamer, 5000 tons, steering S.W. Two patrol boats steering E.
6.45. Norwegian wood steamer *Christiania*, 3000 tons, steering W. in East Deep—

I write, and one after another I visualise the vessels as I record their positions for the benefit of the authorities.

As soon as the report is finished I give it to a messenger, who takes it down to the motor-boat which is waiting to carry it to a warship. Then I rush across the marsh on my motor-bicycle to the mess, and to a late but welcome breakfast.

The small amount of impression left by any particular flight is remarkable. If in the middle of the breakfast some one had said, "You have been fifty miles out to sea, charging through the air at sixty miles an hour, this morning!" I should almost have been surprised, and might have denied it. After your return you quickly forget the voyage you have made. I found the same in night-bombing. You are called away at dinner after beginning your soup. You go to Ostend, drop bombs, and return and carry on with the fish. By the time you are helping yourself to the vegetables you have a vague remembrance of a disturbed dinner, but little more.

You have a distant memory of innumerable searchlights waving like long weeds in an evil pool, and of the dim sweep of the Belgian coast, with the star-shells of Nieuport; but it is like the faint remembrance of a weird dream, and little more.

This brief description of a seaplane patrol is an introduction to the portrayal of a night-flier's existence, because these flights over the sea were the prelude to my flying among the stars, and I found in them the strange allurement that I found later, in an even greater degree, in my night journeys.

It is a glorious sensation to roar on, a few hundred feet above the sea, with a white clinging mist all around in a vapoury circle, knowing by instinct where you are, and

looking ahead for the little chequered buoy or red light-ship to appear at its due moment; to hear the pilot's shouted inquiry, and to write "The Cat" or "Deep Sands" or "King's Channel" or "Long Deep," or one of those splendid-sounding sailor's names, on a piece of paper for him; to fly low over the lonely lightship, and wave a dawn greeting to the watchmen on the deck; to see a long British submarine rise dripping, to welcome the morning, from its all-night sleep far below the restless waters; to fly like a gull, flashing white wings towards the flaming East.

I found the same delight in poring over my charts and drawing a line right out to sea and back again, as later I found in checking on the map the villages and bridges over which I passed on my way to Bruges and Ghent.

Once or twice I had a forced landing at sea. One incident is peculiarly vivid in my memory. Lightly clad, I flew on the seaplane about fifteen miles from land. There was a flaming sunset, and it was growing dark. We were about to turn when the engine began to splutter and pop. The pilot tried to cure its disease, but it was in vain. He throttled the engine back and slowly glided down. The few scattered ships and the dim line of coast slowly disappeared as we drew nearer to the surface of the water, and when we finally landed we were out of sight of any ship at all.

The pilot climbed on to the floats and tried to start the engine again by swinging the propeller, but with no success. Meanwhile it was growing darker. The red and orange splendours of the West were rapidly dying away before the creeping shadows of the East. The calm oily water reflected strangely the after-glow. As I sat on the float, the water lapped melodiously against it, and the shoals of jellyfish which passed by seemed to be jeering at me.

There were no ships in sight, and a cold night wind began to come across the quivering, shining surface of the sea, and the horizon vanished in a faint haze.

The pilot loaded his Verey pistol with a cartridge and fired it. A great ball of white fire sailed through the air and dropped hissing in the water.

Meanwhile, in our scant clothes we were getting cold. Soon it would be quite dark, and we had only half a dozen signal lights left, while we were slowly drifting, we knew not whither, with the tide.

Every quarter of an hour the pilot fired a white Verey's light. I found it very lonely sitting in the drifting seaplane, surrounded by a misty circle of water, with darkness creeping over the sea.

After some time we saw, far away, a red moving light. At once the pilot fired another signal. The red light moved on and drew nearer to us. Soon we could see the shape of the boat on which it was, and to our joy realised that it was a British destroyer. After a

good deal of manœuvring it drew alongside us. We hailed it and shouted our explanations. A boat was lowered from the destroyer, and rowed over to us, carrying a hawser. When we had fastened this to the seaplane we got into the boat, and were rowed to the waiting vessel.

The commander explained that we had landed in the midst of sandbanks, and that it had been a difficult matter to draw near to us.

Soon we were dining in the little mess, and we were very glad to get under cover again, and to have something to eat. The "skipper" was most hospitable, and afterwards, I am ashamed to say, we played "Slippery Ann," and won some money off him.

At last we arrived once more in the harbour. A motor-boat left the slipway, and we were towed ingloriously ashore at about 11 o'clock.

There is an element of uncertainty in seaplaning, as in every branch of flying. There is the case of a seaplane which landed at sea with engine trouble. A German submarine came alongside and took the two unfortunate airmen aboard, and sank the seaplane, so that shortly afterwards the two officers who had been flying through the air were under the surface of the sea.

I remember another incident that happened during the attack on Verdun, which will demonstrate how an extraordinary chain of adventures may come swiftly and unexpectedly to an airman engaged on the most normal routine work.

One day five machines were to fly from one aerodrome in France to another one about fifty miles away. Both the aerodromes were well behind the lines. The leading machine was piloted by a man who knew the country "inside out," and so the last man of the formation knew that if he were to follow his lead he would be all right. It was an extremely cloudy day, and when they had drawn near to the new aerodrome, the last pilot lost sight of the other four machines in the clouds. He flew on for a little while, and climbed up through the barrier of vapour until he was above it. Then, to his joy, he saw ahead of him the four machines, which were flying several miles away, resembling little black dots.

After a time he drew close to them, and, to his great astonishment, they dived down on him, firing their machine-guns. Suddenly he saw that they were marked with the German mark—the black cross. Realising that he was hopelessly outnumbered, as he was on a comparatively slow machine, he put his nose down and tried to get away. He was flying east towards the German lines, but he could not turn, for every time he looked back he saw these four machines just behind his tail, firing frantically at him.

At last he outdistanced them, and they turned away. He flew on under the deep blue of the sky, and over the sunlit white fields of cloudland, which

lay like a tumbled carpet of cotton-wool beneath him, as far as he could see.

He looked at his watch, and saw that he had been flying east for twenty minutes, so he turned and flew due west, towards the French lines. He flew for another ten minutes to make sure of regaining his own lines, and then, throttling his engine, he glided down towards the barrier of cloud. He reached it, and flew for several minutes through damp grey vapour, and at last burst through, and saw the sunless world below.

He looked round for an aerodrome in which to land, and in a few minutes saw a line of hangars some miles distant. At once he turned towards them, and when he was a mile away, he throttled his engine and began to glide down in order to land. He sailed just over the roofs of the hangars, floated a few feet over the grass, and was just about to land when he saw that the machines lined up by the sheds were marked with the black cross. It was a German aerodrome.

Even as he started up his engine and rushed across the grass, the German mechanics climbed into the back seats of the aeroplanes and began to fire at him, while other men started up the engines. Very soon several machines were pursuing him. He dared not climb, for he would lose speed, and would not be able to escape. He flew on, due west, twenty feet or so from the ground, dodging round farms and trees, and now and then jumping over houses, while a mile behind him the German scouts followed him in this strange steeplechase.

He realised now that the wind high up had been blowing strongly due east. It had taken him a long way over the lines, and so he had not allowed himself enough time to get back before he had dived through the cloud-bank.

Again he managed to escape in the chase, and left the pursuing aeroplanes far behind. Ahead of him he could see a line of curling smoke and vapour, with here and there little white puffs of smoke in the air. He was drawing near the lines, and evidently there was an action of some kind in progress. Soon he reached the belt of desolation, of broken houses, shell-torn trees, and devastated fields. Machine-guns on the ground began to fire at him. He could hear their staccato hammering, and could see the flaming streak of the bullets passing by him.

Now he could hear, too, above the roar of the engines, the thud and crash of the shells and of the guns. Everywhere below were great spouts of smoke and earth leaping up as shell after shell burst on the ground. The air was full of the shrapnel barrage against the infantry. Once he had a sudden inspiration to pull back his control-stick. The machine shot up into the air, and he saw just beneath the smoke-burst of a shrapnel shell. If he had continued on a straight course he would have been hit

by it, and probably brought down.

Below him he saw something extremely interesting. In the sunken roads and shattered fortifications near Douaumont were masses of grey-green soldiers. The Germans apparently were gathered for an attack. He noted where these men were, and flew on across the shell-torn area behind the French lines, and landed as soon as he could. The machine ran into a shell-hole and crashed. He crawled out of the wreckage and stumbled across the churned-up ground to the nearest headquarters and reported what he had seen. Immediately action was taken by the French, the counter-attack was forestalled, and the whole course of the battle was changed.

Soon afterwards the airman reached the aerodrome, without his machine, and found he had been reported as missing.

That such an extraordinary chain of adventures can come to a man unexpectedly shows vividly the uncertainty and the romance of flying. The night-bomber, as he leaves his aerodrome, never knows whether, when dawn comes, he will be in his bed at the camp, or in a Dutch guard-room, or hiding in a German wood.

For several months I led this agreeable placid life at the seaplane station. At dawn or at dusk I flew over the sea on my long solitary flights. During the day I wandered round the station, learning about the machines and the engines, and spending many hours in the wireless hut, with the vulcanite receivers over my ears, hearing ship after ship sending its messages in a variety of notes—some high-pitched whines; some urgent, impetuous; some tremendously loud—great cruisers thundering their unquestionable commands; some faint and remote from lonely vessels far away on distant seas.

Wireless telegraphy is a romantic thing. I remember one night walking down a path at a Naval Air Service Station in England and passing a lighted window in a little hut. Some one handed to me through the window a pair of telephone receivers attached to a twisted cord. I put the receiver over my ears and heard the regular scratch, scratch, scratch of the Morse Code.

The operator inside told me that it was a German merchant sending messages from a wireless station outside Berlin to a friend in Madrid, and in that quiet dim path in England I was overhearing their conversation.

One day I was unexpectedly summoned to the Commanding Officer of the Squadron. He handed to me a printed sheet of paper. To my surprise it ordered me to report to No. X Wing (Handley-Page Squadron).

I could hardly realise it at first. I thought that many months of this quiet dreamy life lay before me. I expected no transfer, and at any rate not to this most strange of all squadrons. In those days a Handley-Page was a freak

machine that was a topic of conversation in flying circles everywhere.

A Handley-Page then seemed a grotesque giant. There had been no intermediate steps between small machines and this Colossus, which rumour had it could carry twenty-two men. It was as though a fifty-storey sky-scraper, as large as the Woolworth Building in New York, had suddenly been erected in London.

I had seen, at my training aerodrome, the first of these great machines looming in its hangar. I had clambered over it with astonishment. I had been one of a large crowd which had stood on the aerodrome, and had wondered, as the great structure moved clumsily across the grass, if it really would mount in the air. I had seen it rise and roar round the aerodrome with its deep, double throbbing note, and had gone away full of excitement, proud to have been there.

Little did I imagine that I was to be on the very first which flew to France, and that I was to be on the pioneer squadron of the gigantic night-bombers.

So when I received my orders, I packed my bags a little bemusedly, and with a sad heart left the little harbour, the rows of seaplane sheds, the mess, and my friends —taking away many a memory of quiet days in the marshes, and of almost ecstatic dawn patrols over the grey and silver levels of the North Sea.

I was going on to unknown destinies and unknown destinations. I knew the familiar sensation every man in the service going to a new place must feel so often—of leaving a certain existence, and going on towards an uncertain one.

Although I did not know it, I was going to a year and a half of adventure, of travel, of war and excitement—I was going to a romantic and strangely-appealing life, full of successes and disappointments, full of dreams and realities. The gods had smiled on me, and were leading me to the fantastic and fascinating work which I would have chosen above all others in the world—Night Bombing.

(*To be continued.*)

FESTIVAL.

BY ZERES.

THE retired and pensioned Gurkha soldier outside in the verandah has orderly duties that require his presence at our office between the hours of six and eight each evening.

He is short but stockily built, wears two war medals and a *bahadri*, lacks one eye, and limps as a result of a wound received in action. He lost his eye out of action while worshipping indiscreetly at the shrine of Venus; and after he has looked upon the wine when it is sufficiently red he will sometimes tell you the story. Rifleman Rama Gurung—for that is the old scoundrel's name—looks upon the wine when it is red almost nightly. He arrives at our office strictly sober, and generally leaves it as strictly drunk. When sober he is unbending punctiliousness itself, when drunk embarrassingly expansive, and there are intermediate stages when he merely sits and grins in a passionless Nirvana of his own. It is the problem of our life to discover how and where he effects this monotonously regular transition from grave to garrulous; for although he is always within a few yards of us while we work, we have never yet actually detected him in the act of raising the flowing bowl to his lips. Nevertheless, although neither clink of bottle nor gleam of glass ever disturbs our tedious labours or betrays his stealthy activities, he achieves the mysterious nightly, and, aided by the subtle alchemist, transmutes life's leaden metal into gold with a facility which we cannot help but feel—when distracted by cipher telegrams, the eccentricities of local headhunters, silkworm statistics, or Bengali politics—is secretly to be envied.

But for old Rama's nightly vagaries our evenings would be uneventful. The brief Himalayan sunset flares fierily for fifteen short minutes over the distant rosy-dimpled snows, and then darkness falls, swiftly blotting out the dazzling scene, like a black velvet curtain rung down abruptly upon some limelit but deserted stage. A scared little breeze now rises, and rushes wildly hither and thither among the gloomy and contemptuous pines, while the frogs begin their pious croaking vespers upon the silver lip of the star-stabbed lake beneath us. A rutting stag—the very incarnation of primitive passion—calls hoarsely to his reluctant mate across two miles of empty valley, and the pagan beauty of the hot, dark, lonely night steals through our open windows. Every ghost of memory now takes courage in the shadows, and comes knocking importunately upon a door that ever stands ajar. Gay ghosts, sad ghosts, and

whimsical, child-like little ghosts of nothing in particular . . . all the phantom procession of a tired brain when silence, solitude, and space combine to distract its attention from material and mundane things. However, this is no moment for idle dreaming, because to-night we are "for it," and in our official capacity must visit a neighbouring hamlet in order to bless with our important English presence a local Hindu festival that we call the Dewali. This festival is sacred to the bloody goddess Kali, and it is a lucky night for all bankers and merchants, who seize the occasion to give freely to charity. For this reason the evening is a propitious one for the British official to attempt to extract silver for the Red Cross Society from the buried hoard of the normally miserly *bania*. . . . The British official—*vide* the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*—is ever a detestably Machiavellian creature.

The main street of the bazar that we reach half an hour later is aglow with pale amber fairy lights, to avert the entrance into the homestead of dread Kali the destroyer, and drum and cymbal bray and jingle amid the violent detonations of the highly dangerous Indian cannon cracker. Our dim little lamps do not throw their feeble beams very far, but this is all the better, because the unillumined background rests full of shadowy mystery. People at home imagine that Asiatics are always grave and solemn, but if they were with us now that belief would be swiftly exploded. Our main street is packed as densely as Piccadilly on a Jubilee night, and, as in the Piccadilly of old days, our cheerful, merry crowds go laughing up and down it.

Here is a group of country mice in from some remote jungle, pater- and mater-familias and half a dozen wide-eyed staring children.

There is a bevy of laughing nut-brown light o' loves descending from a *tikha gharri*, gaily dressed it is true, but bafflingly respectable-looking to the European, who can only think of vice with a capital V. Round the corner some jolly little swaggering Gurkhas —bare-kneed, bullet-headed, and bantam-like—are buying *Scissors*, cigarettes, and ogling the girls for all the world like Mr Atkins in the Edgware Road; our clean, smiling, five-foot-four Mongolian defenders are every inch dapper, soldierly, and dandified little Pagans, from their jauntily-cocked slouch hats to their shiny clicking boot heels

Dang, dang, dang, dang!—our thin copper temple bells have neither the sombre timbre nor yet the infinite variety of your sweet Western cathedral chimes—the priests are calling us to prayer. *Tang, tang, tang, tang!* . . . *wh'roosh, wh'rorl, wh'room!* . . . and the conches take up their bellowing choruses, while we all laugh merrily at their acoustic surprises. It takes, you see, but little to amuse us to-night, because we are in such a good temper. A

sacred and flower-garlanded bull treads heavily on our toes, but we only offer him perfumed sweetmeats; and even the savage chattering monkeys in the trees are not forgotten in our catholic scheme of hospitality.

Cholera may be rife, crops may fail, or savage beasts lurk for us on our way home from our jollification, but we are a happy little people to-night in this corner of the foothills—for haven't the priests just told us that our wives will bear us men-children before next harvest, and hasn't that vagabond astrologer drawn us a horoscope which unluckier kings might envy? Let us beat the tom-tom, watch the nautch, quaff the cup, and intimidate the bania! There are bon-bouches of vegetable curry folded between cool green leaves to be tasted, betel-nut in lacquer trays to be chewed, and a hundred other queer delicacies that come our way but seldom in our bee-like, little, laborious lives.

. . . . . .

This is all very well; but there are ever two sides to a picture, and to be on duty during the Dewali is a very different matter to enjoying it as a member of the happy-go-lucky crowd.

We ourselves are now fated to pay a round of visits to various entertainments, both public and private, and we shall only earn our pay for the next few hours by making ourselves agreeable. Our first port of call is a performance given by a Hindu conjurer in aid of the Red Cross. A most superior Indian conjurer this, who is depicted upon a placard as wearing American evening clothes, while his *nom-de-théâtre* is "Mr Funnyman of Calcutta." He is performing at the "Assamese Theatre," and thither, amid a cosmopolitan throng, we wend our way in our slowly driven motor. Slowly driven because no Indian crowd ever takes the slightest notice of a motor-horn; and indeed, were not our progress heralded by three blaspheming Moslem policemen, we doubt if we should ever reach our destination at all.

The "Assamese Theatre" is a thing of beauty and a joy for ever. The scene painted on the drop-curtain is *très anglais*, and depicts what the Manager faithfully believes to be a typical stately home of England. In the immediate foreground are seen the lodge gates that lead to the ancestral demesne within. The pillars supporting the entrance to this rural retreat are apparently wrought of blue marble and red porphyry, tastefully decorated as regards the detail with silver-gilt and mother-o'-pearl. In the background, what might be described as a mansion in the Heavenly Jerusalem style of architecture rears its golden turrets from amid a grove of what are very obviously toddy-palms, and a union-jack floats patriotically from an open window, out of which a lady in a pink-satin ball dress gazes haughtily at a football match.

An elephant is seemingly

about to convey a party of fiercely bewhiskered English noblemen to what looks like a shrimping competition on the rugged sea-coast behind the Castle, and on the extreme right of this happy portrayal of English country life, a fox-hunt is in full progress. The "field" following hounds is entirely composed of "the military," who, without exception, are attired in what Jane Austen calls "full regimentals." The beast that these gold-laced sportsmen are pursuing bears a suspicious resemblance to the Indian badger. Still, where the object of the craftsman be complimentary, some artistic licence must be conceded; and we ourselves have seen "Oriental scenes" upon the London stage that were almost as grotesque in their comic misconception of Eastern life and customs as this startling effort of our own little local painter. At length the curtain rises and reveals our bowing entertainer. We have already said that he promised to be most superior to the ordinary bazar conjurer, and now our expectations are painfully fulfilled. Not for him the mere mango-tree trick, or boys who are bloodily stabbed and slashed in wicker baskets; rather he deals with English playing-cards, yards of coloured ribbon, vanishing coins, or water that is transformed into ink—indeed he is the *dernier-cri* of all the conventionalism of tedious Western magic. His dreary performance is "enlivened"—(that is his own explanation)—by a continual stream of irrelevant patter. As this is delivered in English, nine-tenths of his audience understand not one word. This, however, appears to be of no account, and indeed it seems considered that his unintelligibility adds an element of *chic* to the whole proceedings. His humour is of that perverted variety that sees laughter in all human dismay. Stout and elderly gentlemen are assisted upon the stage, only to be lured into collapsible chairs; shrieking urchins receive electric shocks; and an old lady, having indiscreetly lent her *sari* to this Bengali Mephistopheles, sees it torn into fragments before her weeping eyes.

We ourselves, as almost the only European present, are given an odiously conspicuous seat in the theatre, and to us at intervals Mr Funnyman makes tiresome appeals in connection with his personal integrity in general and the emptiness of his shirt-cuffs in particular. Further, he keeps pressing into our unwilling palms battered opera hats, mouse-traps, or bowls full of goldfish, with a view to our reassuring the pit and gallery as to the mundane nature of such professional apparatus. As the evening wears on, we feel that we begin to hate Mr Funnyman. Surely he owes it to us, his patient public, to make deeper researches into the mines of humorous subtlety before he insults our intelligence by explaining the primary motive actuating domestic fowls when these desire to cross the road. "And if any lady

or gentleman will kindly lend me his or her gold watch or diamond scarf-pin," harangues Mr Funnyman, addressing a confused crowd of blank-faced coolie women, "I will transform the same—as per patriotic programme—into a white kitten."

A pest and a pox on him and his white kittens! We have stayed here as long as the Government of India can humanly expect, so let us away before we, a representative of the Ruling Race, are humiliated by having to confess that we possess neither gold watch nor diamond scarf-pin. Our ideas are not so magnificent as Mr Funnyman's; he has probably got wind in the head through living in that gorgeous Gothic pagoda on the drop scene.

Our duties now take us to what, for the sake of argument, we will call a series of evening parties that are being held in the bazar at the houses of the leading merchants of the city. In almost every case the reception-rooms of these Indian burghers are on the same level as the street; devoid of shutters —as these are—and brilliantly illuminated within, no privacy from the crowd is possible or indeed sought after by our hosts. In some very practical aspects of life, Asia—paradoxically enough—is the only truly democratic continent in the world, for the Eastern millionaire has no objection to his poorer brethren overlooking his feasts, or indeed pushing into them uninvited behind his guests of honour. In all this there is an atmosphere that is vividly biblical. How often do we encounter unexpected characters at Jewish suppers or weddings, when from a Western point of view their presence seems altogether puzzling? However, the woman from nowhere in particular with the box of very precious ointment, and other stray persons with delightfully unconventional intentions, become alive and real when you attend an Indian *Soiree*. We enter the halls of Mr Jitmal with feelings of pride at being on visiting terms with one whose income is said to surpass that of the late Mr Pierpont Morgan. Doubtless local rumour exaggerates, but no matter; let us retain our illusions and with them our pride. Mr Jitmal is a stout and genial *Marwari*, who despite his enormous wealth still lives "over the shop," and you will find no material ostentation about his abode. A small hall ablaze with dripping candles serves him as a saloon, and at the farther end of this apartment is a heavily curtained and overhanging gallery. Here the—probably several—Mrs Jitmals are modestly assembled in order to experience the delirious excitement of witnessing our entry. On the right—under that hideous picture of a blue-faced *Ganesh* or elephant god—is a mighty cushioned divan upon which the son of the house—*ætat.* six—is having a violent difference of opinion with his sister—*ætat.* seven. Master Jitmal's small person is literally stiff with a paltry five thousand pounds worth of badly-set but priceless

jewellery, and he looks more like a diminutive idol or religious doll than an infant of flesh and blood. However, the peculiar pleasure which he seems to derive from pulling his sister's hair reassures you as to his human reality, and so do his howls of triumph when he has finally succeeded in rolling her upon the floor. Horrible child! Heaven help him if we should ever chance to meet him alone on a dark night still cumbered by all that glittering fortune! We are offered an embarrassingly regal-looking chair—all purple velvet and gilded symbolism—while attar, pan, and cigarettes are distributed. Then we are drenched with eau-de-Cologne—like the sacred *Boh* tree near Budh-Gaya, which died from the effects of such honourable treatment—and have to feign intense delight at the tarnishing of the gold lace upon our uniform. We next pull ourselves together with a view to polite conversation.

In the East, polite conversation upon formal occasions is ever a difficult art and one full of pitfalls for the unwary, for which we find no useful hints in Lord Chesterfield's letters to his son. For example, to inquire after the health of your host's wife is to offer him deadly insult, because, like the Queen of Spain, the modest eastern lady is not supposed to possess any characteristics that can be considered corporeal.

To talk about the weather and the crops in a country where the hot, cool, or rainy seasons follow one another with the regular monotony of a seven-day clock, is to cultivate the banal in comment, recalling the newly-joined gryphen's classic remark—during a Punjaub June—to his indignant brandy-seared and mutiny-scarred Colonel—"Good morning, sir; another nice bright sunny day."

It is true that the war has now come to our assistance on such occasions, but to discuss the latest aspects of the submarine menace with a gentleman who has never seen the sea, and who probably thinks you a fluent liar when you tell him that it is possible to sail upon it for days on end without seeing land, has its obvious limitations.

Finally, Mr Jitmal selects the Russian revolution as a cheerful topic for a gala night, and compares the Bolsheviks with his own National Congressmen. We rather sympathise with his views, but feel somehow that this is scarcely the moment for political controversy, more especially as we cannot help hearing the hidden ladies in the gallery discussing our personal appearance, considered matrimonially, with a candour that can only be described as dreadful. At length, after extracting a promise of five thousand rupees for the Red Cross, we make our adieus and leave for the house of another Father of the City.

On occasions like to-night, it is the habit of your hosts to try to outvie one another in introducing an element of surprise or novelty into their hospitality, and upon entering the

next dwelling we are greeted by two gramophones in full blast, playing two different tunes at once.

If your ear should be sufficiently sensitive as to be able to separate the strains of *Wrap up your troubles in your old kit bag, and smile, smile, smile,* from those of *Faki die praner pakhi ure galo ar alona,*[1] you might experience a musical treat, but failing such delicate discrimination your sensations are those of a being living in two dimensions of existence simultaneously. Our new host understands neither Hindustani, Bengali, Persian, nor English, and as we are similarly ignorant of his own exotic tongue, his son—a priggish youth from the local High School—comes to our assistance as an interpreter. The stripling in question is chastely attired in white buckskin cricketing boots, navy-blue knickerbockers, and a football jersey; the whole tastefully crowned by a red crimson smoking-cap, adorned with a sky-blue silken tassel. He is the New India personified, and we mentally congratulate the Education Department on the finished product of their care and culture. Strangely enough, his English is delivered with a hideous Cockney accent . . . where in the world did he pick it up? Not—we feel sure—from his official teachers, for they are purists and precisians of the most fanatic order.

"Fawther sez," begins this oriental Chevalier, "as 'ow 'e's very pleased ter meet yer."

"Give your father my compliments," we reply, "and"—here we very unwisely attempt to be jocular—"tell him that I've come here to-night to loot his money for the war."

The youth—he is exactly like one's mental conception of the learned pig—babbles something excitedly into his parent's ear. Goodness knows what he is saying, but from the ludicrous look of horror that suddenly overspreads that merchant's features, we can only imagine that his son has translated our message literally. We try to be pleasant to the learned pig, and make observations about the beauty of the festival and the happiness of the crowd.

"Ho!" he replies compassionately. "These h'are h'only h'ignorant h'agriculturalists, h'all h'innocent of h'English h'enlightenment, h'indulging h'in h'antique heathen h'idolatry."

We gasp at the wealth of his aspirates, and nearly follow his lead—as though it were a game—by replying that we love our love with a haitch because he is 'andsome.

Casting the dust of the learned pig's home from off our feet, we turn into a small marquee near a booming temple, where a score of Gurkha officers are providing refreshment for the consolation of their friends. Excusing our action on the plea that we

[1] A melancholy Bengali love song—translated, "My heart's bird has flown away without my knowledge and will never return to me."

too, at more normal moments, belong to the military freemasonry, we enter uninvited, and are made welcome for the sake of our uniform, if not for ourselves. An aged and retired Gurkha Subadar, dressed in the rifle-green of his old corps, comes forward, tremulously jingling with seven war medals, and offers us a seat. He informs us that he is over a hundred years old, and we see no reason to doubt his statement. Besides his war medals, he wears decorations for loyalty and gallantry during the Indian Mutiny, the Afghan campaign, and a Burmese expedition. A fine old face, yellow, rugged, wrinkled, and Mongolian-looking, and he still holds himself as straight as an arrow. He proceeds to introduce us to three or four generations of his descendants, all of whom, like their forebear, are officers in Gurkha regiments.

Their villages, they explain, are across the border in Nepaul, so they are allies of the British rather than fellow-subjects, a fact of which they are not a little proud. They offer us rum and tobacco and discuss the war professionally. The youngest — a truculent cock-sparrow-like little figure with the eternal Gurkha grin —lost his arm at Suvla Bay and is still on sick leave, as the stump will not heal. He tells us quietly how his company fought alongside some New Zealanders, and of how together they led the attack, capturing hill number so and so until mistakenly shelled by the fire of our supporting fleet, both were compelled to evacuate the positions which they had so hardly won. "And now," he concludes briefly, "I'm home again after seeing the whole world."

"Ho! ho!" laughs his gallant old grandsire in the corner; "but I too thought I had seen the whole world after I had marched to Lucknow in '57! Aye," he continues reminiscently, "*those* were the days for a soldier! . . . *You* never saw Jan Nikalsain or Lard Gough!" And he mumbles on about the past glories of this or that surprise and rout, when the dusty native columns from the loyal Punjaub swung their thirty sweating miles a day —through seven hells of sunstroke, cholera, and smallpox — in order to break the iron stronghold of the Pandy mutineers at Delhi, or to avenge white women at bloody Nana-betrayed Cawnpore.

We examine shell relics and a Turkish revolver—spoils from off the battlefield—drink their healths, and say farewell.

From an adjacent courtyard comes the roll of drums, the explosion of fireworks, and a thin, high-pitched falsetto voice uplifted in unceasing and monotonous song. It is a Hindu nautch, and our relentless Indian companion — a Bengali civil official, whose presence by our side the whole evening we have hitherto been discourteous enough to ignore —insists that it is our duty to attend it. From an English point of view the Indian nautch is not beautiful. The

performers wriggle rather than dance, and the general impression is uncanny rather than lovely. As the dark ghostly figures shudder and ripple in muscular contortions, you recall De Quincey's opium-born dreams of eerie Hindus and Celestials, whose very children seemed to possess souls older than those of European greybeards. The "star" lady of the performance is gorgeously coiffured but extremely plain: her *tout ensemble* recalls the *chic* but ugly lady-in-waiting to the Empress Eugenie, who frankly described herself as a *Singe à la mode.*

In a corner of the courtyard some Brahmin priests are blessing the idols that are about to be carried shoulder-high in a religious procession. To the Hindu of this part of India the blessing of these idols has a sacramental significance. At one moment the lifeless dolls are things of common clay, but the priest of orthodoxy can breathe divinity into the creature by the repetition of half a dozen *mantras* and occult words of power. The last act of preparing the idols for public worship is the fitting into the sockets of their jewelled eyes. This can only be done by approaching the god from behind, else—as every Hindu child knows well—the judgment of heaven falls and blasts the irreverent. Finally, when the Divinity has been coaxed into material revelation, the tinsel-clad dolls are paraded through the streets and are devoutly worshipped by the crowd. Let, however, no aggessive Christian mock the heathen for their simple piety; for is it not written of comely, roguish, and flute-playing young Krishna—the most human of Hindu gods[1]—that "they who worship idols also worship me"?

The old gods of Hind are not over particular about nice points in dogmatic theology—devoutness *qua se,* however misdirected, being the first criterion of spiritual worth in India. For this reason Brahminism never quarrels with newer religions; it philosophically *absorbs* them. For all practical purposes it has already absorbed Indian Buddhism; it is attempting—not altogether unsuccessfully—to absorb Sikhism; and were the English missionary to leave the country, it would similarly absorb Indian Christianity.

Amid the—now—religiously inclined crowd are men with money-boxes collecting for the Mesopotamian wounded. An aged crone, leaning on a gnarled stick, inquires as to the meaning of these collecting-boxes, for she has already paid her seemly dues to the priests. It is explained to her that money is required for wounded Indian soldiers, but for whom this peaceful valley might be a crimson shambles

[1] In the Hindu Pantheon, Krishna—the cowherd's son—is, in one of his aspects, a subtle mixture of Cupid and Pan; a teasing young pastoral god who bewitches village maidens by the elusive wistfulness of his pagan music.

"And do they lack money in the war hospitals?" she cries tremulously; "are the sahibs then so poor?" "Aye, mother; otherwise, why do they bid us collect?" She fumbles desperately in her ragged old bosom, and produces a bent anna or penny piece. "I had been keeping it," she explains apologetically, "to buy my sick grandchild a fairing, but it is not right that strong men should die comfortless and alone without tobacco, sweetmeats, or opium."

Surely the widow at the Temple, who cast her last mite into the treasury, earned a smile of divine recognition no more dazzling than that which to-night must have been vouchsafed this poor old "heathen" beggar woman?

. . . . . .

The lights are now growing dim, because midnight is a late hour for a people ever astir long before dawn.

The unlovely voice of the prowling night-watchman mingles hideously with the dismal wail of the nocturnal jackal, and the malevolent brain-fever bird shrieks mocking defiance at the weary, who, tossing upon the hot roof-tops, fain would sleep.

The narrow streets are suddenly emptied of excited humanity, and the stink of stale incense, burned butter, and sacred cow-dung offends the nostrils of the Night.

India — the great demi-mondaine among countries — now yawns voluptuously, and, her painted face and garish tawdriness half-hidden by the merciful darkness, she looks immorally beautiful, as smiling inscrutably she falls asleep.

Our motor-car climbs laboriously up the firefly-speckled mountain pass, its acetylene lamps staring warily across abysmal precipices of vertical shadow. Before we reach our Japanese-contrived earthquake-proof cottage on the summit, a beautiful and fearless panther bounds silently across our path. His jade-jewelled eyes, milk-white fangs, and hot scarlet palate are all vividly lit up by our great dazzling head-lights: good luck and good hunting, little bronze brother—for you the rustling night has a thousand coquettish whispers; but for us duller-eared mortals "the fun of the fair" is over, and nothing now remains except heavy-lidded — and boring — sleep.

GOTT MIT UNS.

AN IMPRESSION OF THE CRITICAL DAYS OF MARCH 1918.

BY THE RIGHT HON. SIR JOHN SIMON, M.P.

On the Wednesday in Holy Week my duty took me, morning and evening, along and across the valley of the Somme and through the city of Amiens. The Germans had swept past Bapaume and Péronne, and were as far forward as Albert and Bray, less than twenty miles from Amiens itself; but rumour was travelling faster than the enemy, and had already invaded in force the meaner quarters of the great town and the villages farther east, driving the poor before it. Bombs dropped the previous night in large numbers had convinced even the waverers that safety was best sought in the countryside to the west; and as the staff car approached the city from that side, it met an ever-increasing multitude of refugees trudging miserably along in little groups, with their backs turned on their homes.

The majority of the crowd were women — the younger amongst them wearing their best clothes as the easiest way of carrying them. Facing the morning breeze, and with the sun behind them, many had started confident and almost cheerful in spite of bundles or satchels crammed with so much of their possessions as they hoped to be able to transport. Most of them had overestimated their powers: some were already staggering under the load. Here was a solitary crone, grey-haired and limping, with battered and bulging portmanteau in one hand, and a reticule containing a pair of boots, a kettle, and a parcel from which a piece of dust-covered bread protruded, in the other. Here was a young widow, dressed in the ugly livery of her condition, pushing before her a perambulator in which her baby was almost smothered by utensils and knick-knacks snatched up from the dwelling where husband and wife and child had been happy together until the curse of War fell upon them. He lies in an unnamed grave before Verdun; she was walking aimlessly on; the child was beating a little drum.

Then the old men! These, too, for the most part, dressed in black and absurdly overburdened. A surprisingly large proportion of them had found a wheelbarrow on which to load their household goods. A mattress, a strip of carpet, an untidy bundle of clothes, pots

and pans tied together with string, and parcels innumerable, made up the usual luggage. Nearly every one seemed to have a dog, Very often a cow followed, tugged along by a rope round her horns. Every few minutes the man with the wheel-barrow stopped, sat to rest on one handle while his wife sat on the other, then readjusted the strap over his shoulders and started pushing again. One very old man I saw whose barrow, as he wheeled it, served as arm-chair for his invalid wife: she sat there comfortably enough, hands folded in her lap and feet dangling, looking up at him as he toiled along with the wistful, patient gaze of the infirm who must rely on another's strength and kindness. What was she thinking of, I wonder? How often had that old couple moved house together—how many years had she trusted him to lift her? And at last her musings had come to this—How could the vigorous husband of her youth, now that he was so enfeebled and broken, find the force to move them both? As his body swayed she caught a glimpse, behind his shoulder, of the frail spire of the cathedral crowning the black mass of its nave. What a little way they had come, and with how much exertion! But as they had nowhere to go, perhaps it did not matter much. There was desperation and gloom in his unshaven face, but the poor old wife kept gazing peaceably at him as they trundled slowly by.

At intervals a more substantial equipage came down the road—sometimes a huge farm-waggon drawn by three or four horses, with cattle following, and the whole contents of the house stacked within. The old grandmother and the children could be seen perched insecurely on top of the pile, the rest were walking. Sometimes it was an overloaded pony-chaise, or a baker's cart, or even a small motor-car. But as one looked down the slope of the road, it was obvious that these cases of comfortable travel were rare: the mass of the stream was made up of wretched poverty on foot, utterly hopeless and homeless.

Inside the town of Amiens every shop was shuttered. No trams were running; no cafés were open. It would have seemed a city of the dead were it not for some household still delayed in its departure, or some slinking, sinister figure waiting perhaps for nightfall to begin marauding. Every one, in and out of town, seemed intent on his own problem. No one was conversing.

. . . . . .

Returning in the late afternoon along the same road, I was struck by the difference which the lapse of a few hours had made in these pilgrims—any gaiety they ever had

amongst them had disappeared. The March wind had opposed them all day; it was turning colder, and after sundown there would be frost. Many had already realised that they could find no roof to shelter them that night, and in every hollow little parties were camping as best they could on the ground. Some were sitting at the roadside in the dull torpor of misery, staring at the load they now found too heavy to lift. Under a hedge a mother was baring her breast to give her infant its last meal. Two old women were frenziedly trying to repair a barrow that had pitched their odds and ends into the road. The singing of a drunken wanton frightened a boy of six, and he buried his face in his mother's dusty skirt till the woman slapped him and dragged him on. Some of the very people whom I had met in the morning I overtook at dusk—they seemed to have covered little ground. Others, doubtless, had reached their friends or found shelter.

There were British troops on the road—tramping back in twos and threes to rest-billets, and tired enough themselves. But all along the road, and every few yards along it, you saw a soldier wheeling some woman's barrow or perambulator, or carrying a child on his shoulder. Heavy motor-lorries, marked "W.D.," and each bearing the emblem of its unit, came rolling by, and out of the hood behind peered in the gathering darkness a cluster of tired faces, young and old. Farther on, a field-artillery column was moving slowly west. Whether army regulations permit old women to ride on limbered waggons I know not—but there they were.

"This is a bad business," said I to my driver.

"What if it were in our country, sir?" he replied.

We stopped our car now and again. "There are three places, Madame, or perhaps four if there are children." I had seen little sign of any group of these people helping another group, but when a middle-aged woman, who seemed to be leading another, was invited, she accepted for her sister who was blind, but said that if we would wait there was a blind man with two children not far behind, and she would continue to walk if we would take them too. So the two blind and the two children clambered in, and were left in the appointed meeting-place in the village five miles on. It then appeared that the two blind people did not know one another. A New Zealander came to the rescue, and promised to stand by them until their friends on foot arrived. So we left them surrounded by their bundles. "How long did it take, sir, this *course*?" asked the blind girl. "About ten minutes." She gave a little gasp of pleasure, and you could see that she felt she now had one experience of life that even her sister, who could see, might envy.

When the car turned at the bend of the road and mounted from the river-valley, the groups of refugees had all been left behind. Many, many were crouching in the undergrowth of the woods behind us, vainly trying to keep warm in spite of the bitter wind. The very young and the very old could hardly survive such a night; all alike were innocent of any part or lot in the crime from which they were suffering. The moon, shining full above the distant cathedral, can seldom have looked down on such an accumulation of misery.

. . . . . .

That night the Kaiser telegraphed to his Empress: "My troops continued their glorious advance, driving the enemy before them. God is with us."

THE WAR OFFICE IN WAR TIME.

BY MAJOR-GENERAL SIR C. E. CALLWELL, K.C.B.

SOME day, no doubt, an illuminating record of what the War Office achieved in transforming this country into a great military Power under the inspired, if unorthodox, leadership of Lord Kitchener, will make its appearance. The time has not arrived for divulging many matters in connection with its methods and its procedure. But a few tales of the lighter kind, and some experiences undergone in early days by an official who spent four years within its precincts and under its shadow, may perhaps be told even now without impropriety.

Called up—most unexpectedly—to preside over a very large and not unimportant military department in Whitehall when the mobilisation summonses were issued, I found myself confronted at the very outset by an unexpected difficulty. Working on rollers on the walls of my spacious office there were huge maps of the prospective scenes of operations, and in particular there was one of vast dimensions portraying what even then was called the Western Front. The Headquarters Staff of the Expeditionary Force thought fit to spend their time in my apartment, clambering on and off a table facing this map, discussing strategical problems in penetrating whispers, and occasionally expressing an earnest hope that they were not a nuisance. They were an intolerable nuisance, but one had to lie. What else could one do? Moreover, as hour to hour passed, and His Majesty's Government could not make up its mind to give the word "Go" to the Expeditionary Force, the language of its Headquarters Staff became—well, the less that is said about that language the better. It was not easy to concentrate one's attention upon questions arising in the performance of novel duties in a time of emergency under such distracting conditions, and it was a genuine relief when the party took itself off to France.

My responsibilities turned out to be of a most varied nature, covering pretty well the whole field of endeavour, from drafting documents bearing upon operations-subjects for the information of the very elect, down to returning to him by King's Messenger the teeth which a well-known staff officer had inadvertently left behind him at his club when returning to the front from short leave. The Intelligence Department was under my control, and this caused me to be much sought after in the early days—to be almost snowed under indeed with applications and recommendations for the post of "Intelligence Officer." Qualifications for this particular class of employment turned out to be of a most varied kind. One

gentleman, who was declared to be a veritable jewel, was described as a pianist, fitted out with "technique almost equal to a professional." The leading characteristic of another candidate appeared to be his liability to fits. Algy, "a dear boy and *so* good-looking," had spent a couple of months in Paris after leaving Eton a year or two back. This sounds terribly like petticoat influence; but resisting petticoat influence is, I can assure you, child's play compared to resisting Parliamentary influence. For good, straightforward, unblushing, shan't-take-no-for-an-answer jobbery, give me the M.P. They are magnificent in their hardihood.

During the earlier months of the great conflict, duties were not carried out at the War Office exactly on the lines contemplated by the Esher Committee as mellowed by later experience, and it was somewhat disconcerting for the Director of Military Operations to learn quite by accident one day that a force was to be despatched to the Western Theatre of War, which was not to be under Sir J. French's orders — at least for the time being. What turned out to be a somewhat tragic episode was not without some little comic relief. There was consternation in Whitehall one evening just before the dinner hour, when tidings arrived that a couple of the transports conveying this force to its destination had passed the rendezvous where the convoy was mustering, and were at large, heading without escort or orders for a water-area known to be mined by both sides, and where enemy destroyers and similar pests were apt unexpectedly to make their appearance. Fortunately the panic was of short duration, because on returning to the office after dinner one learnt that the straying vessels had both fetched up on the Goodwins—luckily about low-water —and were under control again.

It was about that juncture that an eminent British statesman appeared like a bolt from the blue in a historic Continental city that was imperilled by the approach of the devastating Hun. There was encouragement in his gestures, victory in his pose, fire in his eye. "Que veut donc dire cette uniforme qu'il porte, monsieur le ministre?" inquired an inexpressibly interested citizen of a British staff officer, who enjoyed the good fortune to be present on this great occasion. "C'est, vous savez," rejoined the staff officer, puffed up with patriotic pride at the spectacle and knowing the language, "le frère ainé de la Trinité." "Mais quelle position extraordinaire," murmured the citizen, more impressed than ever.

I was occasionally called upon to attend meetings of the War Council after the first two or three months, and fairly often when the Cabinet grew in numbers up to twenty-three, and when the War Council expanded, more or less *pari passu*, into the "Dardanelles Committee." Pretty well the whole lot of them belonged

to that. The impression carried away from meetings of this body was one of a great number of exceedingly intelligent civilians, who discussed at inordinate length matters that they did not understand, and who arrived at the wrong, or else at no, conclusion. There was a shocking scene occasionally when Mr Lloyd George was attacked by one of those paroxysms of strategical percipience to which the Right Honourable Gentleman was a martyr, and which are understood not to have yielded to treatment even to this day. Mr Churchill also was as busy as a bee about that time, evolving a series of most masterly memoranda, each advocating an entirely new war policy, or urging the claims to attention of some theatre of suggested operations to which nobody previously had turned his mind. These effusions were invariably couched in terse, vigorous, convincing language, that studiously avoided reference to resources, and means, and time, and distance, and climate, and communications, and tonnage, and landing-places, and those other multifarious factors which the sailor and the soldier—who in due course will have to stage the command performance—regard as of such cardinal importance, after their hidebound unimaginative fashion. Printed on the grey-green paper affected by the Foreign Office when it sends secret documents to press, the distribution of these documents to certain fortunate persons was of almost daily occurrence. It was, as Mr Asquith plaintively observed, "like a hen laying eggs."

An excellent innovation at the War Office synchronising with mobilisation was the introduction of a large number of boy scouts within its portals. They proved most reliable and useful, and did the utmost credit to the fine institution for which we have to thank Sir Robert Baden-Powell. A day or two after joining I wanted to make the acquaintance of a colonel, who I found was under me in charge of a branch—a new hand like myself, but whose apartment nobody in the place could indicate. A War Office messenger despatched to find him came back empty-handed. Another War Office messenger sent on the same errand on the morrow proved no more successful. On the third day I summoned a boy scout into my presence—a very small one—and commanded him to find that colonel and not to come back without him. In about ten minutes' time the door of my room was flung open, and in walked the scout, followed by one of the biggest sort of colonels. "I did not know what I had done or where I was being taken," remarked the colonel, "but the boy made it quite clear that he wasn't going to have any nonsense; so I thought best to come quietly."

The plan that the lads adopted for making things uncomfortable for troublesome people paid eloquent testimony to that fertility of resource which it is one of the objects of the scout movement to de-

velop in its members. One of the greatest worries to which War Office officials have been exposed during these anxious times has been a bent on the part of individuals, whom they have not the slightest wish to see, for demanding — and obtaining — interviews. The scouts tumbled to this (if one may use so vulgar an expression) almost from the first day, and they acted with rare judgment and determination. They chose *Lasciate ogni speranza, voi ch' entrate* for their motto, and adopted the method of herding the intruders into an unattractive apartment on the ground floor, as tube attendants herd subterranean travellers into the lifts, and of keeping the intruders there until they verged on a condition of mutiny. They then enlarged them in big parties, each of which was taken charge of by a scout, who led his charges round and round and in and out along the corridors, and up and down between floors, carefully avoiding the elevators, until the victims were in a state of physical and mental collapse. If one of the party quitted the ranks while on the trek, to read the name marked up on some door that he was passing, the scout called a halt and withered the culprit with a scowl,—it would never have done to permit that sort of thing, because the visitor might conceivably have noticed the name of the very official whom he had come to see. Anybody who came again after undergoing this experience once, probably had just cause for demanding an interview; but one bout of it satisfied most people. It may be suggested that the scouts were acting under instructions from Sir Reginald Brade, Secretary and Grand Master of the Ceremonies, in this matter; but, if asked, he will own up and admit that in the pressure of his duties he overlooked the point, and that the entire credit belongs to the boys.

Still, perambulation of those furlongs of corridor in the big building in Whitehall might have offered points of interest to a visitor not too exhausted to take notice. By one window was usually to be seen a posse of parsons, of furtive aspect, each nervously twiddling a lissom hat, a love-your-neighbour-as-yourself look frozen on their countenances, and not quite conveying for the time being an impression of the church militant: they were candidates for the post of army chaplain, about to be inspected by the genial prelate who presides over the department responsible for the spiritual welfare of the troops. A day or two later might be seen in the same place some of these very candidates, decked out in khaki raiment, hung about with contrivances into which combatant comrades introduce implements for slaying their fellow-men, erect, martial, terrifying, the very embodiment of the church triumphant, having been accepted for the job and awaiting orders—and no men have done finer service in the Great Adventure. At another point one encountered a very well-known cricketer, who was

doling out commissions. How he did it one had no time to ask; but one suspected that, if one of the young gentlemen whom he took in hand had been in a school eleven or even house eleven (or said he had), crooked ways somehow became straight. Just outside my own door an attractive-looking civilian had devised a sort of wigwam within which he took cover—one of those arrangements with screens which second lieutenants prepare when there is a regimental dance, and which they designate, until called to order, as "hugging booths." There he was to be seen at any hour of the day in close communion with a charming lady, heads close together, murmuring confidences, an idyll in a vestibule—or rather a succession of idylls, because there was a succession of ladies, all of them different except in that all of them were charming. After two or three months he disappeared, and only then did it occur to me to ask what these intimate transactions were on which he had been engaged. It transpired that he was acting vicariously on my behalf, that he was selecting a staff for censorship duties, or some such dull occupation, in my place. If good looks were a qualification for such employment, that civilian must have been troubled with an *embarras de richesses.*

Amongst the many privileges and responsibilities which my position in the early months of the war thrust upon me was that of finding myself in more or less official relations with the Eminent K.C. and with the Self-Appointed Spy-Catcher. One may have had the good fortune in pre-war times to meet the former, when disguised as a mere human being—on the links, say, or at the dinner table. The latter one came into contact with for the first time. At a later stage of the proceedings I saw something of another interesting type—the "Man of Business" when pitchforked into a Department of State.

The average soldier seldom finds himself associated with the Eminent K.C. on parade, so to speak, in the piping times of peace. When performing, and on the war-path as you might say, this successful limb of the law is a portentous personage. Persuasive, masterful, clean-shaven, he fixes you with his eye as the boa-constrictor fascinates the rabbit. Pontifically, compassionately, almost affectionately indeed, he makes it plain to you what an ass you in reality are, and he looks so wise the while that you are hardly able to bear it. He handles his arguments with such petrifying precision, he marshals his facts so mercilessly, he becomes so elusive when you approach the real point, and he grows so bewildering if he detects the slightest symptoms of your having discovered what he is driving at, that he will transform an elementary military question, which you in your folly have presumed to think that you understood, into a problem which a very Moltke would ignominiously fail to elucidate. Contact with the Eminent K.C. under such con-

ditions makes you realise to the full what an inestimable boon lawyers confer upon their fellow-citizens when they sink all personal ambition and flock into the House of Commons for their country's good. The Eminent K.C. is, by the way, reputed to be a somewhat expensive luxury when you avail yourself of his services in your civil capacity, but he must be well worth it. A man who can be so mystifying when he proposes to be lucid must prove a priceless asset to his client when he undertakes the task of bamboozling a dozen unhappy countrymen penned in a box. It is hard to picture to yourself this impressive figure giggling sycophantically at the pleasantries of a humorous judge. But he must have conformed to convention in this matter in the past, for how otherwise could he now be an Eminent K.C.?

During many months of acute national emergency, while the war was settling into its groove, there was no more zealous, no more persevering and no more ineffectual subject of the King than the Self-Appointed Spy-Catcher. You never know what ferocity means until you have been approached by a titled lady who has persuaded herself that she is on the track of a German spy. We Britons are given to boasting of our grit in adversity, and of our inability to realise when we are beaten. In no class of the community were these national traits more conspicuous in the early days of the war than in the ranks of the amateur spy-catching fraternity and sisterhood—for the amateur spy-catcher never caught a spy. Only after months of disappointment and failure did these self-appointed protectors of their country begin to abandon a task which they had taken up with enthusiastic fervour, and which they had prosecuted with unfaltering resolution. Although it was at the hands of the despised professional that enemy agents were again and again brought to face the firing party in the Tower ditch, the amateurs entertained, and perhaps still entertain, a profound contempt for the official method. One fair member of the body, indeed, so far forgot herself as to write in a fit of exasperation to say that we must—the whole boiling of us—be in league with the enemy, and that we ought to be "intered." They were in their element when, after the fall of Maubeuge, it transpired that the Germans had gun-platforms in certain factories, situated within range of the forts, that they had established ready prepared for action should they be required. Anybody with an asphalt lawn-tennis court then became suspect. A very bad case was reported from the Chilterns, just the very sort of locality where Boches contemplating invasion of the United Kingdom would naturally propose to set up guns of big calibre. A building with a concrete base—many buildings do have concrete bases nowadays—near Hampstead was the cause of much excitement. When the unemotional official, sent to

inspect the place, suggested that the extremely solid structure overhead would be rather in the way if one proposed to emplace a gun or guns on the concrete base, it was urged that there was a flat roof, and that ordnance mounted on it would dominate the Metropolis. There was a flat roof, but it turned out to be of glass.

The Man of Business' procedure, when he is placed at the head of a Government department, or of some branch of a Government department, in time of war is well known. He makes himself master of some gigantic building or some set of buildings. He then sets to work to people the premises with creatures of his own. He then, with the assistance of the superior grades amongst the creatures, becomes wrapped up in devising employment for the multitudinous personnel that has been got together. He then finds that he has not got sufficient accommodation to house his legions—and so it goes on. He talks in moments of relaxation of "introducing business methods into Whitehall." But that is absurd. You could not introduce business methods into Whitehall, because there is not room enough; you would have to commandeer the whole of the West End, and then you would be cramped. While the big men at the top are wrestling with housing problems, the staff are engaged in writing minutes to each other—a process which, when indulged in in out-of-date institutions of the War Office, Admiralty, Colonial Office type, is called "red tape," but which, when put in force in a department watched over by Men of Business, is called "push and go." Engulfed in one of these mushroom departments in later stages of the war, I could not but be impressed by what I saw. The women were splendid: the way in which they kept the lifts in exercise, each lady spending her time going up and down, burdened with a tea-cup or a towel, and sometimes with both, was beyond all praise.

The successful Man of Business has owed his triumphs to aptitude in capturing the business of other people. Therefore when he blossoms out as a Government official in charge of a department, he devotes his energies to trying to absorb rival departments. It was a case of fat kine endeavouring to swallow lean kine, but finding at times that the lean kine were not so badly nourished after all—and took a deal of swallowing. And yet successful Men of Business, when introduced into Government departments, do have their points. One wonders how much the income-tax payer would be saved during the next decade or two, had some great knight of industry been placed in charge of the Ministry of Munitions as soon as Mr Lloyd George had, with his defiance of Treasury convention, with his wealth of imagination, and with his irrepressible and buoyant courage, set the thing properly on its legs. Unsuccessful Men of Business, when introduced into Government departments have their points too,—bad points mostly.

My staff was from the outset numerically a fairly substantial one, and it was composed partly of officers and others brought in on mobilisation to fill the places of picked men who had been spirited away into the Expeditionary Force, and partly of individuals acquired later, as other regular occupants were received up into the framework of the growing military forces of the country. New blood was thus introduced into the War Office under the shadow of my wing. Its methods might be a little unorthodox at times, but it generally managed to accomplish what it undertook.

Take "X," for instance, who had been retrieved from the Reserve of Officers and business pursuits, but who retained the instincts of the soldier—a man with all his wits about him, but who sometimes positively frightened one by his unconventional procedure. One hardly likes to say such a thing of a man behind his back, but I really should not have been surprised to hear that he had put one of those bulky War Office files that the messengers carry about into the fire, because he was unable to agree with views that he found expressed in it by other branches. He made up his mind in a moment, which was irregular; and he generally made it up right, which was unprecedented. His duties were of a particularly varied kind; but the one which he carried out with the greatest distinction was that of procuring interpreters. Experts in many outlandish tongues had to be found from the start, and "X" always managed to produce the article required at the shortest notice. As a matter of fact he had laid hands upon a tame professor, whom he kept immured in a fastness somewhere in the attics, and who was always prepared to vouch for the proficiency of anybody in any language when called upon.

The first Divisions of the "Old Contemptibles" to proceed to the Continent were fitted out with interpreters by the French. But for some reason or other a Division going to the front some weeks later had not been prepared for, and so we suddenly found that we had to furnish it with its linguists at this end. Confronted unexpectedly with this problem, "X" demanded, "How many do you want, sir?" I intimated that the authorised establishment was about seventy, but that if we could produce fifty under the circumstances we should have done very well. "I'll have them ready early to-morrow, sir," he remarked, as if it was the most ordinary thing in the world, and he did. For next morning the passages in the immediate vicinity of the room that he graced with his presence were congested with swarms of individuals, arrayed in the newest of new uniforms and resplendent in the lightest of light-brown belts and gaiters, who were hustled off unceremoniously to regiments and batteries and staffs on the eve of departure for the seat of war. It is quite true that some generals and colonels in this Division wrote from France to complain that

their interpreters did not know French, or if they did know French they did not know English. But nobody takes that sort of thing seriously. In a grumbling match the British officer can keep his end up against the British soldier any day.

Then there was "Y," a picturesque and compelling figure, with nothing really serious against him except that he was a candidate for parliamentary honours. Starting in a comparatively humble position, a hewer of wood and a drawer of water as it were, "Y," by sheer force of character, by originality of conception, and by virtue of inborn acquisitiveness, had, before the war was nine months old, accomplished a species of rake's progress, had extorted gratifying concessions from an unsympathetic bureaucracy in respect to his own rank and emoluments, and had built up round himself a mammoth department. Still, the department merely represented the plant; "Y" constituted the flower. Well might he have said with Napoleon: "I was destined to rise, nothing could have kept me back." He had a way with him when he approached the financial authorities which those parsimonious officials found irresistible, and which proved a trump card on the frequent occasions when it occurred to him to expand his entourage.

Although he was a soldier, he developed some of the propensities of the Man of Business. If he heard of a new set of offices approaching completion in the vicinity of Whitehall, and furnished with the fittings demanded by a progressive civilisation, he commandeered them on the spot and devised a new section to house in them. Some amongst the myriad admirers of Mr Lloyd George have, by the way, claimed for our present Prime Minister the credit of inventing this system. But they are under a misapprehension. Their idol in reality merely perfected methods of which "Y" was father and first exponent. "Y" no doubt was satisfied with comparatively small things, with edifices of perhaps twenty apartments or so, while Mr Lloyd George would snap up the Metropole (and forget to pay for it). Still "Y" was the inventor of the plan, even if Mr Lloyd George showed how the invention could be put to more comprehensive use, and if the Man of Business in due course consummated the design.

For his own accommodation and that of his inner cabinet, "Y" had secured the great Committee Rooms — noble apartments, panelled in oak, and held to be so sacred that the Secretary peremptorily refused to permit their transformation during the night-watches into a dormitory for the orderly officers. There "Y" dwelt in state for many months, seated in a great leathern chair of the dimensions of a throne, dignified and courtly in his dealings with equals, kindly and condescending in his manner towards inferiors. The worst of it was that when Sir W. Robertson came over from the Front to assume supreme control of the

military side of the War Office, he bundled "Y" and his flock unceremoniously out of these palatial apartments and laid hands on them himself. It was a deplorable act of vandalism.

Less stricken in years than "Y," a subaltern at the start in fact, fitted out with all the virtues of the typical subaltern, but furnished in addition with certain virtues that the typical subaltern does not necessarily possess, "Z" was certainly not the least interesting and attractive personality adorning the War Office staff. It could not be said of him that

> "deep on his brow engraven
> Deliberation sat and sovereign care,"

but he treated Cabinet Ministers with an engaging blend of firmness and familiarity, and he could, when occasion called for it, keep Royalty in its place.

Once, when he thought fit to pay a visit on duty to Paris and the Front, he took me with him, explaining that unless he had a general officer in his train there might be difficulties as to his being accompanied by his soldier servant. Generals and colonels and people of that kind doing duty at the War Office did not then have soldier servants—but "Z" did. It is, however, bare justice to him to acknowledge that, after I had served his purpose, and when he came to send me back to England from Boulogne before he resumed his inspection of troops and trenches, he was grandmotherly in his solicitude that I should meet with no misadventure. "Have you got your yellow form all right, sir? You'd better look. No, no; that's not it, that's another thing altogether. Surely you haven't lost it already! Ah, that's it. Now, do put it in your right-hand breast-pocket, where you won't get it messed up with your pocket-handkerchief, sir, and remember where it is,"—it reminded one of being sent off as a small boy to school.

It was his practice to make a round of the different Public Departments of a forenoon, and to draw the attention of those concerned in each of them to any matters that appeared to him to call for comment. The Admiralty and the Foreign Office naturally engaged his attention more than others, but he was a familiar figure in them all. His activities were so varied indeed that they almost might have been summed up as universal, which being the case, it is not perhaps altogether to be wondered at that he did occasionally make a mistake. For instance—

He burst tumultuously into my room one morning flourishing a paper. "Have you seen this, sir?" As a matter of fact, I had seen it; but, as the document had conveyed no meaning to my mind, dissembled. Its purport was that 580 tons of a substance of which I had never heard before, and of which I have forgotten the name, had been landed somewhere or other in Scandinavia. "But do you know what it is, sir? It's the most appalling poison! It's the concoction that the South Sea Islanders smear their bows and arrows with—cyanide and prussic acid are soothing-syrup

compared to it. Of course, it's for those filthy Boches. 580 tons of it! There won't be a bullet, or a Zeppelin, or a shell, or a bayonet, or a dart that won't be reeking with the stuff." I was aghast. "Shall I go and see the Director-General, A.M.S., about it, sir?"

"Yes, do, by all means. The very thing."

He came back presently. "I've seen the D.-G., sir, and he's frightfully excited. He's got hold of all his deputies and hangers-on, and the whole gang of them are talking as if they were wound up. One of them says he thinks he has heard of an antidote, but of course he knows nothing whatever about it really, and is only talking through his hat. I tell you what, sir—we ought to lend them a hand in this business. I know Professor Stingo; he's miles and away the biggest man on smells and that sort of thing in London, if not in Europe. So, if you'll let me, I'll charter a taxi and be off and hunt him up, and get him to work. If the thing can be done, sir, he's the lad for the job. May I go, sir?"

"Very well, do as you propose, and let me know the result."

He turned up again in the afternoon. "I've seen old man Stingo, sir, and he's for it all right. He's going to collect a lot more sportsmen of the same kidney, and they're going to have the time of their lives, and to make a regular night of it. You see, sir, I pointed out to him that this was a matter of the utmost urgency—not merely a question of finding an antidote, but also of distributing it methodically and broadcast. After it's been invented, or made, or procured, or whatever's got to be done, some comedian in the Quartermaster-General's show will insist on the result being packed up in receptacles warranted rot-proof against everything that the mind of man can conceive till the Day of Judgment—you know the absurd way those sort of people go on, sir—and all that will take ages, æons." He really thought of everything. "And there'll have to be books of instructions, and classes, and the Lord knows what besides! After that the stuff'll have to be carted off to France and the Dardanelles, and maybe to Archangel and Mesopotamia; so Stingo and Co. are going to be up all night, and mean to arrive at some result or to perish in the attempt. And now, sir, what have you done about it at the Foreign Office?"

This was disconcerting, seeing that I had done nothing.

"Oh, but, sir," sounding that note of submissive expostulation which the tactful staff officer contrives to introduce when he feels himself obliged reluctantly to express disapproval of superior military authority, "oughtn't we to do something? How would it be if I were to go down and see Grey, or one of them, and to talk to him like a father?"

"Well, perhaps it might be advisable to make a guarded suggestion to them on the subject. Give my compliments to ——" But he was gone.

He returned in about half an hour. "I've been down to the Foreign Office, sir, and as you might have expected, they

haven't done a blooming thing. What those 'dips' think they're paid for always beats me! However, I've got them to promise to cable out to their ambassadors and consuls and bottle-washers in Scandinavia to keep their wits about them. I offered to draft the wires for them; but they seemed to think that they could do it themselves, and I dare say they'll manage all right now that I've told them exactly what they are to say. I really do not know that we can do anything more about it this evening," he added doubtfully, and with a worried, far-away look on his face. Good heavens, he was never going to think of something else! He took himself off, however, still evidently dissatisfied and communing with himself.

Next forenoon he came into my room in a hurry. "I've been hearing about the caterpillars, sir," he exclaimed joyously.

"The caterpillars?"

"Oh, not crawly things like one finds in one's salad, sir. The ones the Admiralty are making[1]—armoured, motor contrivances, with great big feet that will go across country, and jump canals, and go bang through Boche trenches and barbed wire as if they weren't there. They'll be perfectly splendid—full of platoons and bombs and machine-guns, and all the rest of it. I *will* say this for Winston and those mariners across Whitehall—when they get an idea, they carry it out and do not bother whether the thing'll be any use or can be made at all—care no more for the Treasury than if it was so much dirt, and quite right too! Just what it is. But when they've got their caterpillars made, they won't know what to do with them, any more than the Babes in the Wood. Then we'll collar them, but in the meantime I might be able to give them some hints, so, if you'll let me, I'll go across and——"

"Yes, yes; but just one moment. How about the poison?"

"The poison, sir? What poi—oh, that stuff. Didn't I tell you, sir? It isn't poison at all. You see, sir, it's this way. There are two forms of it. There's the white form, and that *is* poison, shocking poison; it's what the Fijians use when they want to pacify a busybody like Captain Cook who comes butting in where he isn't wanted. As a matter of fact there's uncommon little of it—they don't get a hundredweight in a generation. Then there's the red form, and that's what Johnnies have been dumping down 580 tons of at Whatsits-name. It's quite innocuous, and is used for commercial purposes—tanning leather, or making spills, or something of that kind. Now may I go to the Ad——"

"But have you told all this to the Director-General?"

"Oh yes, sir. I told him first thing this morning."

"Did he pass no remarks as to your having started him off after this absurd hare of yours?"

[1] The first I heard of the "Tanks," which made so successful a debut near the Somme a year and a half later.

"Well, you see, sir, he's an uncommonly busy man, and I didn't feel justified in wasting his time. So, after relieving his mind, I cleared out at once."

"And your professors?"

"Oh, those professor-men—it would never do to tell them, sir. They'd be perfectly miserable if they were deprived of the excitement of muddling about with their crucibles and blow-pipes, and retorts and things. It would be cruelty to animals to enlighten them—it would indeed, sir; and I know that you would not wish me to do anything to discourage scientific investigation. Now, sir, may I go over to the Admiralty?" And off he went. A treasure: unconventional, resourceful, and determined. The man to get a thing done that one wanted done—even if he did at times get a thing done that one didn't particularly want done—and in some respects quite the best intelligence officer I have come across in a fairly wide experience.

It has been as well that life in the War Office during the Great War—and especially was it well during those early anxious days of 1914 and 1915—has had its lighter side. The astonishing cheeriness of the British soldier even under the most trying circumstances has become proverbial; but his officer shares this priceless characteristic with him, and displays it even amid the deadening surroundings of the big building in Whitehall. But the best laugh that we enjoyed during that strenuous period was on the morning when news came that Anzac and Suvla had been evacuated at the cost of only some half-dozen casualties and of the abandonment of a very few worn-out guns. Then it was that an official who was very much behind the scenes extracted a document on the familiar grey-green paper from his safe and read it out with appropriate "business" to a joyous party.

This State paper, a model of incisive diction and of moving prose, conceived in the best Oxford manner, drew a terrible picture of what might occur in withdrawing troops from a foreshore in presence of a ferocious foe. Its polished periods portrayed a scene of horror and despair, of a bullet-swept beach, of drowning soldiers and of shattered boats. It quoted the case of some similar military operation, where warriors who had gained a footing on a hostile coast-line had been obliged to remove themselves in haste and had had the very father and mother of a time during the process—it was Marathon or Syracuse, or some such contemporary martial event, if I remember aright. This masterly production, there is reason to believe, had not been without its influence when the question of abandoning the Gallipoli Peninsula was under consideration of those responsible. I had enjoyed a somewhat singular experience in connection with those discussions myself. But that story must wait for a time when more serious matters can be passed in review.

IRELAND.

A LARGE number of people in England are demanding that the recommendations of the Convention should be put in force immediately. It is not unnatural that a man who has not made any special study of the subject should say, "Parliament has decided to give self-government to Ireland. A Convention of Irishmen of all parties has met, and has decided by a large majority the precise form which they wish that self-government to take. Then let us at once carry out their wishes, and so settle for ever the Irish question, which has been the worry of England for centuries. The objection made by a handful of recalcitrants cannot be allowed to thwart the wishes of the nation." But it may be doubted whether those who take this line have ever examined what the circumstances were in which the Convention came to its conclusion; what its recommendations are, or what would be the probable result of enforcing them.

In August 1914, when Mr Asquith broke his pledge and advised the King to sign the Home Rule Act, he gave a solemn undertaking, on behalf of himself and his colleagues, that they never would do anything in the way of coercing Ulster, and that the Act would never be put in force until an Amending Act had been passed. In May 1916 he decided that, in consequence of the Rebellion, Home Rule should be introduced without further delay. He offered to do so, excluding six counties. That offer the Nationalists rejected. He then proposed to summon a Convention, composed of all parties, in the hope that they might come to some agreement. The Ulstermen only consented to take part in the Convention on the express condition that its recommendations should not be enforced unless they had been arrived at not merely by a majority of the Convention, but by all the parties represented at it. This was only natural on their part; for to say otherwise would have been tantamount to an admission not merely that they waived their objections to the existing Act and the promise of an Amending Bill, but that they agreed to accept any extensions of the existing Act which the Nationalist majority at the Convention might see fit to recommend.

Four parties were represented at the Convention—the Ulstermen, the Southern Unionists, the Nationalists, and the Labour Party.

On the 25th February 1918, Mr Lloyd George wrote to Sir H. Plunkett—

"It is of the highest importance, both for the present

situation and for future good relations in and with Ireland, that the settlement should come from an Irish Assembly and *from mutual agreement among all parties.* To secure this, there must be *concessions on all sides.* . . . It is clear to the Government that . . . the only hope of agreement lies in a solution which on the one hand provides for the unity of Ireland under a single Legislature with adequate safeguards for the interests of Ulster and the Southern Unionists, and, on the other hand, preserves the wellbeing of the Empire and *the fundamental unity of the United Kingdom.*"

Sir H. Plunkett's idea of concessions on all sides was that, inasmuch as the Nationalists had increased their demands since 1916, the Ulstermen should give up their claims altogether. The Ulstermen found, soon after the Convention commenced its sittings, that the Nationalists recognised no responsibility for any portion of the pre-war National Debt or for the present war expenditure, and did not admit that under Home Rule the Imperial Parliament should have any power of levying taxes in Ireland for any purpose whatever. As the Nationalist members expressed it, "We regard Ireland as a nation, an economic unity. Self-government does not exist where those nominally entrusted with affairs of government have not control of fiscal and economic policy." They found also that the Nationalists demanded that compulsory service should not be imposed on Ireland unless with the consent of the Irish Parliament. The discussions showed that the aim of the Nationalists was to establish a Parliament practically free from effective control by the Imperial Parliament. Believing that these demands would create turmoil at home and weakness abroad, they refused to sign the Report.

The line taken by the Southern Unionists was peculiar. They took part in the deliberations and signed the Report; but they added a note recording their unaltered conviction that the Legislative Union provides the best system of government for Ireland, and stating that they regard it as a vital point that an adequate contribution should be made by Ireland to Imperial services. This action on their part was unfortunate. It has led careless people, who read the Report but do not take the trouble to study the notes, to imagine that the Southern Unionists are now reconciled to Home Rule. Recent events have shown that that is certainly not the case. More than that, it has enabled dishonest people, trusting to this carelessness, to represent that a larger measure of agreement has been reached upon the principle and details of Irish self-government than has ever yet been attained. People who retain an unaltered conviction that

the Legislative Union provides the best system of government for Ireland, cannot fairly be said to have agreed to the principle of Home Rule.

The Sinn Feiners were asked to take part in the Convention, but declined. It cannot be said that the position they adopted was illogical. Mr Asquith stated emphatically in his speech in Dublin that Ireland is a nation—not two nations, but one. A public man, making a carefully-prepared speech on an important occasion, must be taken to have used words in the sense which his audience would understand them; and this was practically an admission that Ireland occupies the same position as that which the Southern States of America claimed to occupy in 1861. If Ireland is really a nation, it is not unfair to demand that a plebiscitum should be held asking the people what form of government they desire, and that their decision should be acted on — whether they desire a Monarchy or a Republic, and whether they wish to be united to another nation or not. This is what the Sinn Feiners demanded; and they refused to take part in the Convention on any other terms.

It is an arguable point whether Sinn Fein should be regarded as a separate party or merely a section of the Nationalists, now temporarily separated, as the Parnellites and anti-Parnellites once were. But for the present purpose the point is immaterial. Taking one view, the largest political party in Ireland were not at the Convention at all; taking the other, the Nationalists who were there only represented a section of the party, and there is no reason to believe that the larger section would have agreed to the recommendations contained in the Report.

The Labour party does not hold the same independent position in Ireland that it does in Australia or elsewhere. The great strike of some years ago showed that a large part of it in Dublin is as much under clerical influence as any other section of the Nationalists; the Citizen Army has practically united with the Republican Army; and some of the Labour party at Belfast are quite as ardent Unionists as Sir E. Carson himself.

So, then, Sir H. Plunkett's much-vaunted measure of agreement only amounts to an agreement between two or three sections of the Nationalist party after all.

But if the recommendations of the Convention are thus deprived of much of their moral weight, they are very valuable as showing what the smallest measure of Home Rule is that will satisfy what is called the moderate section of the Nationalist party. As Mr Devlin said, when speaking at Belfast on October 13, 1918: "The demand we make is clear and unequivocal. It is for an Irish Parliament for the whole of Ireland, with full control over all purely Irish affairs, and with full fiscal, legislative, and executive power. The Home

Rule Act of 1914 makes provision for extended fiscal authority for Ireland under certain conditions which have since arisen, and the time has therefore come for Ireland to demand full control of the imposition, collection, and disposal of Irish taxation. With less than this she will not be satisfied."

The Report was presented in a peculiar form. It was prepared in such a hurry that there was not time to draw up a document of the usual type, containing an introduction, a statement of facts and arguments, and winding up with a series of formal Resolutions. In order to understand what conclusions the Convention really did come to it is necessary, therefore, not merely to read the Report itself and the disingenuous letter which Sir Horace Plunkett forwarded with it, but to study the whole volume, including the Reports of Committees and Sub-Committees which were subsequently ratified by the majority of the Convention. An instance showing how easily a careless reader may be misled is supplied by Lord Brassey's letter to 'The Times.' He says that the Report shows that the Convention decided that the supreme power and authority of the Parliament of the United Kingdom shall remain unaffected and undiminished over all persons and things in Ireland, and therefore argues that conscription is a matter belonging to that Parliament and not the Dublin one. Had he studied the volume carefully he would have found that the Dublin Parliament is to be nominally subordinate but really supreme, as the incident about conscription shows; for the Convention had accepted the view that it was a direct consequence of the creation of an Irish Parliament that any measure of this character must be submitted to the Irish Parliament before it could be enforced in Ireland.

That Ireland should not pay anything towards the existing National Debt was taken for granted by the Convention. It was also specially stated in the Note added by the majority of the Nationalists.

The Convention expressed a pious opinion that in future Ireland should pay a contribution towards Imperial services. But no sum was fixed; it was to be left to the Irish Parliament to say what they would like to pay. A minority of the Nationalists suggested as a concession to Ulster that a sum should be fixed, but the suggestion was not adopted. It may be mentioned that the only sums proposed were very small. And the term "Imperial expenditure" is to include money given for financing the Irish Congested District Board, and the expense of the Irish local Territorial Force. Hence it may be safely said that not one penny will ever leave Ireland for Imperial services; the total cost of the Army (including those regiments which are still to bear Irish names), the Navy, and the Consular services must be borne by Great Britain.

On the other hand, Great Britain is at once to pay £1,330,000 towards completing pending cases of land purchase, and about £13,500,000 for building houses in Ireland. (It is true that the Report adopted by the Committee speaks of the "Central Government"; but as the paragraph is headed "Degree of Assistance proposed for Ireland," those words must refer not to the Dublin but the London Government.)

Some of the Nationalist members have dwelt on the fact that the terms of reference given to the Convention contained the single limitation that the Constitution must be within the Empire, and have accordingly assumed that it is to be like those of the self-governing Dominions. That is the basis on which the Report is founded. It is obvious that in that case Ireland, even if it remains part of the Empire, will cease to be a part of the United Kingdom. Sir H. Plunkett has recently said in his letters to the papers of last July, that Mr Lloyd George in his letter of the 25th February accepted generally the agreement already reached by the majority of the Convention. But as Mr Lloyd George in that letter said that the Irish Legislature must preserve the wellbeing of the Empire *and the fundamental unity of the United Kingdom*, it can hardly be supposed that he realised what the Agreement reached by the Convention involved. As a matter of fact, he did not receive the Report until months after he had written that letter.

But even if the people of Great Britain are quite prepared to bear the whole burden of the National Debt (including the cost of the war) and of the future maintenance of the Army and Navy, the question still remains, Do they realise what enforcing the recommendations of the Convention will entail?

In the first place, there is the Ulster difficulty. That Ulster will not voluntarily come under the Nationalist Government is certain. Sir H. Plunkett, in his letters already quoted, assumes that if Home Rule is brought into force during the war, Ulster will submit tamely, rather than act in a manner disloyal to the Empire and the troops at the Front. The fact that Ulster went on sending recruits, although Mr Asquith broke his pledge in August 1914, would at first sight appear to be an argument in favour of this. But the two cases are not parallel. The Ulstermen fully realise that the overwhelming majority of the Dublin Parliament will be Republican, and that the step towards complete independence will be short and swift. What loyalty do they owe to an Empire from which they have been cast out? If they cannot remain a part of the Empire, they would rather form a Republic of their own, which would be ruled more in accordance with modern ideas than the Dublin Republic ever will be. It may be mentioned in passing that the guarantees

offered by the Convention are illusory. If (as is no doubt will be the case) there is a solid Republican majority in the Dublin Parliament, what does it matter whether that majority is twenty or forty? Probably, one of the first things the Parliament will do will be to pass an Act forbidding any one to teach except in the Irish language. In that way it can shut up the Belfast University and all the schools in Ulster.

But Ulster may be coerced. It is true that doing so would involve breaking a solemn pledge; but the Government have already done that twice, so there is no improbability of their doing it again. The Nationalists are anxious that they should; Mr Stephen Gwynn has used his position in connection with the present recruiting movement as an opportunity for going about the country saying in his speeches that if Ulster will not come in voluntarily Ulster must be coerced. A Nationalist writer in the 'Contemporary Review' has argued that as Ulster consented in 1916 to give up two counties, its claims as to the remaining six should be disregarded. In one sense it would be easy enough, as so many of Ulster's stalwart sons have fallen, fighting for the Empire. The only difficulty will be, Who will do it? The attempt to force the British Army and Navy to do so in 1914 did not lead to very happy results; and the soldiers and sailors are not likely to be more willing now, since they have been insulted and stoned in the streets by the Nationalists throughout the war. To be sure, there is the Republican Army, which is said to number 200,000; but their quality has not been tested; and it would seem rather ridiculous for the Government to release the leaders from prison to enable them to make war on Ulster.

But supposing that difficulty to be got over, will the people of England regard with satisfaction the prospect of a Parliament meeting in Dublin, the large majority of which will undoubtedly be Republican, and which will probably commence its labours by passing a Resolution in favour of separation?

It seems to be the dream of some people in England that if the Ulstermen are forced under the Dublin Parliament, they will form a pro-English party in it which will be a check to Republicanism. There is not a chance of anything of the kind taking place. The best of the Ulstermen will emigrate; most of those who have to remain will hold aloof from politics; the few who may possibly take part will probably join with an extreme section in the hope of making the Irish Republic free from clerical influence; but all will realise that separation is inevitable.

THE RETURN PUSH.

BY QUEX.

I.

On a day towards the end of April the colonel and I, riding well ahead of the brigade, passed through deserted Amiens and stopped when we came upon some fifty horses, nose-bags on, halted under the trees along a boulevard in the eastern outskirts of the city. Officers in groups stood beneath, or leaned against, the high wall of a large civil hospital that flanked the roadway.

Reinforced in guns and personnel, and rested after the excitements and hazards of the March thrust-back, our two brigades of Divisional Field Artillery, and the D.A.C., were bound again for the front. These waiting officers formed the advance billeting parties.

"We've been obeying Sir Douglas Haig's Order of the Day—getting our backs to the wall—growled the adjutant to me, after he had sprung up and saluted the colonel. "The staff captain met us two hours ago at ——; but they were shelling the place, and he said it wouldn't be safe for waggon lines; so we came on here. He's inside the building now seeing if he can put the whole Divisional Artillery there. . . .

"I'll bet we shan't be ready for the batteries when they come in," he went on gloomily—and then added, like the good soldier that he is, "My groom will show you where the horses can water."

A long-range shell, passing high overhead and exploding among the houses a long way behind us, showed that Amiens was no health resort. But horse lines were allotted, and in due course the long corridors of the evacuated building resounded with the clatter-clatter of gunners and drivers marched in to deposit their kits. "You've got a big piece of chalk this morning, haven't you?" grumbled the adjutant to the adjutant of our companion brigade, complaining that they were portioning off more rooms than they were entitled to. Still he was pleased to find that the room he and I shared contained a wardrobe, and that inside the door was pinned a grotesque, jolly-looking placard of Harry Tate—moustache and all—in "Box o' Tricks." The discovery that a currant cake, about as large as London, sent a few days before from England, had disappeared from our Headquarters' mess-cart during the day's march, led to a tirade on the shortcomings of New Army servants. But he became sympathetic when I explained that the caretakers, two sad-eyed

French women, the only civilians we ourselves met that day, were anxious that our men should be warned against prising open locked doors and cupboards. "Tell 'em any man doing that will be shot at dawn," he said, leaving me to reassure the women.

Twenty-four hours later, after another march, our guns were in position. With pick and shovel, and a fresh supply of corrugated iron, the batteries were fortifying their habitations; Brigade Headquarters occupied the only dwelling for miles round, a tiny café that no shell had touched. The colonel had a ground-floor room and a bedstead to himself; the adjutant and myself put down our camp-beds in an attic, with the signalling officer and the American doctor next door, and H.-Q. signallers and servants in the adjoining loft that completed the upper storey. It was a rain-proof comfortable shelter, but the C.R.A. didn't altogether approve of it. "You're at a cross-roads, with an ammunition dump alongside of you, and the road outside the front door is mined ready for blowing up should the Boche advance this way," he said grimly, when he visited us. "In any case, he'll shoot by the map on this spot immediately he starts a battle. . . . I think you ought to have a retiring headquarters in readiness." So I put in two days superintending the erection of a little colony of houses, built of ammunition boxes and corrugated iron, half a mile from the main road. I camouflaged the sloping roofs with loose hay, and, at a distance, our "Garden City" looked like a bunch of small haystacks. We got quite proud of our handiwork; and there was a strained moment one midday when our regimental sergeant-major rode hurriedly to the café with a most disturbing report. Riding along the main road he had observed a party of men pulling down our huts, and piling the sheets of corrugated iron into a G.S. waggon. When he cantered across the driver whipped up his horses, and the G.S. waggon bounded over the open fields for half a mile before the sergeant-major got sufficiently near to order it to halt. "They belong to the —st brigade, sir," the sergeant-major informed the adjutant, "and I've told the sergeant in charge of the party to consider himself under arrest until you have seen him."

The adjutant, eye flashing, nostrils dilated, was already out of the café walking hard, and breathing dire threats against the servant who had been posted to guard our new home. Apparently he had gone away to complain that the cook was late in sending his dinner.

The sergeant and his assistant "privates" were restoring the dismantled huts by the time the adjutant and myself drew near. The sergeant was plainly a disciple of the "It's all in the same firm" school. He submitted, with great respect, that he was innocent of criminal intent. There was nothing to show that the huts

were in use . . . and his battery wanted iron for their gun-pits.

"None of your old soldier talk with me," blustered the adjutant, shaking a ponderous forefinger. "You knew you were doing wrong. . . . Why did you send the waggon off when you saw the sergeant-major?"

"I went after it and stopped it when he told me to, sir," returned the sergeant.

The sergeant-major admitted that, strictly speaking, this was a correct statement. There was a ten seconds' pause, and I wondered what the adjutant's next thrust would be.

"The waggon was trotting away, was it?" he demanded slowly.

"Yes, sir," replied the sergeant.

"And you made no attempt to prevent it trotting until the sergeant-major told you to stop it?"

"No, sir."

"And you know it's forbidden for waggons to be trotted except in very exceptional circumstances?"

"Ye-s, sir."

"Very well, I put you under arrest for contravening G.R.O. by trotting draught-horses."

"Artful beggar—I know him of old," chuckled the adjutant, as he and I returned to the café. "He was a gunner in my battery when I was sergeant-major of —— Battery, R.H.A."

The Boche was expected to attack on St George's Day. Our brigade was defending a reserve line, and would not fire unless the enemy swept over our first-line system. Fresh trenches were being dug, and new and stout rows of wire entanglement put down. Corps orders were distinct and unmistakable. The fight here would be a fight *à outrance*. On March 21 our retirement had been a strategic one. But this Front had to be held at all costs, and we should throw in every reserve we had. Only once during our stay in the café did the adjutant and myself sleep in pyjamas. "These walls are so thin one 5·9 would knock the whole place out; if we have to clear we may as well be ready," he said meaningly. The ridge, three-quarters of a mile in front of us, was shelled regularly, and every night enemy bombing planes came over, but, strangely enough, the Boche gunners neglected our cross-roads; we even kicked a football about until one afternoon a trench mortar officer misdirected it on to the main road, and an expressive "pop!" told of its finish under the wheel of a motor-lorry. St George's Day, and still no Boche attack! We began to talk of the peaceful backwater in which we were moored. Manning, our mess waiter, decorated the stained, peeling walls of the mess with some New Art picture post-cards. I found a quiet corner, and wrote out a 'Punch' idea that a demand for our water-troughs to be camouflaged had put into my head. Major Bullivant, who had succeeded poor Harville in

the command of B Battery, and Major Bartlett of C Battery, dined with us that night, and the best story told concerned an extremely non-military subaltern, newly attached to the D.A.C. When instructed to deliver an important message to "Div. Arty."—the Army condensation for "Divisional Artillery"—he pored long and hopelessly over a map. Finally he appealed to a brother officer. "I can't find the village of 'DIVARTY' on the map," he said, and, of course, sprang into immediate fame throughout the Division.

April 24: About 4 A.M. a shell burst that shook the café. Then the steady whistling scream of high-velocity shells going overhead. I lighted a candle and looked at the adjutant as he poked his red face and tousled grey hair from under his blankets. "They've started," he muttered solemnly. "The old Hun always shells the back areas when he attacks."

We got up slowly, and fastened boots and leggings. "I suppose we ought to put on revolvers," he went on dubiously, and then added with sudden warmth, "I hope he gets it in the neck to-day."

Our telephone pit in the cellar below the café was alive with industry. Our batteries were not firing, but the colonel had already asked the battery commanders whether any shells, particularly gas shells, had come their way. A couple of 4·2's had landed close to C Battery, but they seemed to be stray shots; it did not seem likely that the enemy knew where the batteries were sited. The Boche bombardment continued.

After breakfast, a 5.9 exploding 200 yards from our café, blew out the largest pane in the unshuttered window. Shells had dropped by now in most spots around us; but the cross-roads remained untouched. A cyclist orderly from our waggon line, two miles back, brought news that a direct hit had blown the telephone cart to bits; fortunately, neither man nor horse had been touched. The adjutant was outside exhorting four infantry stragglers to try and find their units by returning to the battle line. A Royal Fusilier, wounded in the head, had fainted while waiting at the cross-roads for an ambulance; our cook had lifted him on to a bench inside the café, and was giving him tea. The colonel, who remained in the mess, in telephone touch with the Brigadier-General, C.R.A. and the Brigade Major, had never seemed so preoccupied. Days afterwards, he confided to me that when the Hun bombardment started he feared a repetition of the overpowering assault of March 21.

"They had tanks out to-day," a boy captain of infantry, his arm in a sling, told me, as he climbed into a motor ambulance. "By Gad, I saw a topping sight near X——. The Boche attacked in force there and pushed us back, and one of his old tanks came sailing merrily on. But just over the crest, near a

sunken road, was a single 18-pdr.; it didn't fire until the Boche tank climbed into view on top of the crest. Then they let him have it at about 100 yards' range. Best series of upper-cuts I've ever seen. The old tank sheered off and must have got it hot." I learnt afterwards that this was a single gun detachment belonging to our companion brigade, who had been pushed forward as soon as news came that the enemy was being held.

By tea-time we ourselves had been ordered forward to relieve a brigade that had suffered considerably in the opening stages of the assault. And, after all, we didn't occupy the "Garden City" headquarters I had been at such pains to build. We handed it over to the brigade we were relieving, and their colonel congratulated our colonel on his forethought.

The colonel decided that only the doctor, the signalling officer, and myself should go forward. The adjutant could settle at the waggon lines and occupy himself with reinforcements, clothing, and salvage returns, Army Form B 213, watering and forage arrangements, and suchlike administrative duties. My task would be the "Forward" or "G" branch—*i.e.*, assisting the colonel with the details of his fighting programmes.

The colonel and I lay down that night in a hole scooped out of a chalk bank. The corrugated iron above our heads admitted a draught at only one corner; as our sleeping-bags were spread out on a couple of spring mattresses, moved by some one at some time from some neighbouring homestead, we could not complain of lack of comfort.

April 24 was the last day on which our brigade awaited and prepared to meet a Boche attack of the first magnitude. But it was not until the month of July that any of us conceived, or dared to believe in, the possibility of his mighty armies being forced upon the defensive again.

During May and June we accepted it that our *rôle* would be to stick it out until the Americans came along *en masse* in 1919. The swift and glorious reversal of things from August onwards surprised no one more than the actual fighting units of the British armies.

II.

"We're doing an attack to-morrow morning," said the colonel, returning about tea-time from a visit to the C.R.A. "We are under the —th Divisional Artillery while we're up here, and we shall get the orders from them. You'd better let the batteries know. Don't say anything over the wire, of course. . . . Any papers for me to see?" he added, pulling out his leather cigarette case.

I handed him the gun and

personnel returns, showing how many men and guns the brigade had in action; and the daily ammunition reports that in collated form find their way from Divisional Artillery to Corps, and from Corps to Army, and play their part in informing the strategic minds at the back of the Front of the ebb and flow of fighting activity all along the vast battle line, enabling them to shape their plans accordingly. "D Battery are a bit low in smoke shells," remarked the colonel. "You'd better warn Major Veasey that he'll want some for to-morrow morning."

"A Battery . . . two casualties . . . how was that?" he continued, before signing another paper.

"About an hour ago, sir. Their mess-cart was coming up, and got shelled half a mile from the battery position. Two of the servants were wounded."

"I've never seen an order worded quite like that," he smiled, when I showed him a typed communication just arrived from the Divisional Artillery, under whose orders we were now acting. It gave the map co-ordinates of the stretch of front our guns were to fire upon in response to S.O.S. calls. The passage the colonel referred to began—

> "By kind consent of the Colonel of the —th French Artillery, the S.O.S. barrage on our front will be strengthened as follows: . . ."

"Sounds as if the French colonel were lending his batteries like a regimental band at a Bank Holiday sports meeting, sir," I ventured.

"Yes, we are learning to conduct war in the grand manner," smiled the colonel, opening his copy of 'The Times.'

Our mess, under a couple of carved iron "elephants" stuck against the bank, had looked a miserable affair when we came to it; but judicious planting of sandbags and bits of "scrounged" boarding and a vigorous clean-up had made it more habitable. Manning, the mess servant, had unearthed from a disused dug-out a heavy handsome table with a lacquered top, and a truly regal chair for the colonel—green plush seating and a back of plush and scrolled oak—the kind of chair that provincial photographers bring out for their most dignified sitters. By the light of our acetylene lamp we had dined, and there had been two rubbers of bridge, the colonel and the little American doctor bringing about the downfall of Wilde, the signalling officer, and myself, in spite of the doctor's tendency to finesse against his own partner. The doctor had never played bridge before joining us, and his mind still ran to poker. The Reconnaissance Officer of the —th Divisional Artillery had rung up at 10 o'clock to tell us that an officer was on his way with a watch synchronised to Corps time, and that we should receive orders for the next morning's operation *viâ* a certain Field Artillery Brigade who were somewhere in our

vicinity. I had told the brigade clerk that he could go to bed in his 3 feet by 6 feet cubby-hole, and that the orderlies waiting to convey the battle orders to the batteries ought to snatch some rest also. It was 11 P.M. now. Wilde and the doctor had gone off to their own dug-out. It was very dark when I looked outside the mess. We were in a lonely stretch of moorland; the nearest habitation was the shell-mauled cottage at the railway crossing, two miles away. Every ten minutes or so enemy shells screamed and flopped into the valley between us and the road alongside which D Battery lay.

"We'll try and hurry these people up," said the colonel, picking up the telephone. Even as he told the signaller on duty to get him Divisional Artillery, a call came through. It was the Artillery Brigade from whom we expected a messenger with the orders.

"No!" I heard the colonel say sharply. "We've had nothing. . . . No! no one has been here with a watch. . . . You want an officer to come over to you? . . . But I haven't any one who knows where you are."

A pause. Then the colonel continued. "Yes, but you know where we are, don't you? . . . Umph. . . . Well, where are you to be found? . . . You can't give a co-ordinate over the telephone? . . . That's not very helpful."

He rang off, but I knew by his expression that the matter was not yet settled. He got through to the —th Divisional Artillery and told the Brigade Major that it was now 11.20 P.M., that no officer with a synchronised watch had arrived, and that the other brigade were now asking us to send an officer to them for orders for the coming battle. "I have no one who knows where they are," he went on. "They must know our location—we relieved one of their brigades. Why can't they send to us as arranged? I may have some one wandering about half the night trying to find them."

In a little while the telephone bell tinkled again. "I'll answer them," said the colonel abruptly.

"All right, I'll send them," he replied stonily. "Where are we to find them, since they won't give us co-ordinates over the telephone? . . . A house with a red roof! . . . You can't tell us anything more definite? . . . Very well. . . . Good-bye."

He put down the telephone with a little "Tchat!" that meant all forms of protest, annoyance, and sense of grievance. But now that no possible concession was to be gained, and certain precise work had to be done by us, he became the inexorable matter-of-fact executive leader again. "There's nothing for it," he said, looking at me. "You will have to go."

Buildings with red roofs are not marked as such on military maps, and I bent glumly over the map board. However, houses were exceedingly few in

this neighbourhood, and the chateau on the other side of the railway could be ruled out immediately. It was known as "The White Chateau," and I had noticed it in daytime. Besides, it had been so heavily shelled that our companion brigade had evacuated it two days before. "It's pretty certain to be somewhere in this area," observed the colonel, bending over me, and indicating a particular three thousand square yards on the map. "I expect that's the place—on the other side of the railway," and he pointed to a tiny oblong patch. I estimated that the house was three miles from where we were. It wanted but five minutes to midnight.

I went outside, and flickering my electric torch stumbled across ruts and past occasional shell-holes to the copse, three hundred yards away, that sheltered the officers' chargers. I crackled a way among twigs and undergrowth until the piquet called out, "Who goes there?"

"I think your groom's here, sir," he said, and the trees were so close set that my shoulder brushed the hindquarters of a row of mules as he piloted me along. "Are you there, Morgan?" he shouted, pulling open a waterproof ground-sheet that was fastened over a hole in the ground. "No—go away," called a voice angrily. "Where's Morgan sleep. Mr —— wants him," persevered the piquet.

We found my groom in another hole in the ground about thirty yards away. He listened sleepily while I told him to get my horses ready immediately. "Do you want feeds on, sir?" he asked, with visions apparently of an all-night ride.

There was no moon, and I gazed gratefully at the only constellation that showed in a damp unfriendly sky—the Great Bear. I let my horse find his own way the first few hundred yards, until we struck a track, then we broke into a trot. The swish and plop of gas shells in the valley towards which we were descending made me pause. I calculated that they were falling short of the railway crossing I wanted to reach, and decided that a wide sweep to the right would be the safest course. We cantered alongside some ploughed land, and the motion of the horse, and the thought that with luck I might finish my task quickly, and even earn a word of commendation from the colonel, brought a certain sense of exhilaration. The shelling of the valley increased; my horse stumbled going down a bank, and for the next five minutes we walked over broken ground. "Getting a bit too much to the right," I said to myself, and turned my horse's head. Further thoughts were cut short by the discovery that his forelegs were up against a belt of barbed wire.

For ten minutes I walked in front of the wire, searching for an opening, and getting nearer to where the shells were falling. All the time I looked earnestly for the railway line. I began to feel bitter and resentful.

"If our own Divisional Artillery had been doing to-morrow's show I shouldn't have had to turn out on a job of this kind," I reflected. "Damn the —th Division. Why can't they do their work properly?"

But little gusts of anger sometimes bring with them the extra bit of energy that carries a job through. We had reached a ruined wall now, and there was still no opening in the wire. I could see telegraph posts, and knew that the railway was just ahead. I got off my horse, told the groom to wait behind the broken wall, and, climbing through the barbed wire, picked my way along smashed sleepers and twisted rails until I came to the crossing.

I followed the deserted shell-torn road that led from the level-crossing, searching for a track on the left that would lead to the house I sought. A motor-cyclist, with the blue-and-white band of the Signal Service round his arm, came through the hedge.

"Is there a house on top of that hill?" I asked him, after a preliminary flicker of my torch.

"Yes, sir."

"Is it a red-roofed house?"

"Well, . . . I don't know, sir."

"Who's up there?"

"Smith's group, sir."

"Oh, hang! that tells me nothing. What are they—artillery?"

"Yes, sir—heavies, I think, sir."

I felt myself at a standstill. Orders for us were not likely to be with a group of heavy artillery. "Whom are you from?" I asked finally, preparing to move on.

"From the —th Div. Artillery, sir."

"Oh!" — with a rush of hopefulness — "you have no orders, I suppose, for the —nd Brigade?" — mentioning our brigade.

"No, sir."

I broke off and strode up the hillside, determined at any rate to gather some sort of information from the house the motor-cyclist had just left. I came upon a bare-looking, two-storied brick building with plain doors and windows. Through the keyhole of the front door I could see a light coming from an inside room. I opened the door and walked down the passage, calling, "Is this the —rd Field Artillery Brigade?"

"No! This is the —nd Field Company," replied a fair-moustached sapper captain, who was lying on a mattress in the room from which the light came, reading a book of O. Henry stories.

"Sorry to trouble you," I said, "but I'm trying to find the —rd Brigade. Do you know if they are round here?"

"I don't, I'm afraid. We only came in this afternoon."

"It's a house with a red roof," I went on, rather hopelessly.

"I think I know the place," chimed in a voice from an inner room. "It's a shooting-box, isn't it? Your best way is to get on the road again and take the next track on the left. I

noticed a red-roofed house up there when we came by."

I trudged back and got on to the new track, feeling very martyred but very resigned. I suppose I ought to have kept my eyes open more, I thought. Next time I go to a new part of the country I won't miss a single distinguishing feature.

It was now 1.15 A.M. I came to a lonely house with a neatly railed garden in front. I hammered noisily on the door and found that it opened into a darkened passage. A torch flashed into my face. "Is this the —rd Brigade?" I began.

"Yes," a voice shouted, and suddenly a door opened and a spurt of light revealed a youthful pink-cheeked staff lieutenant. "Are you from the —nd Brigade?" he asked. "Oh, bon! bon!—I've been waiting for you."

"Waiting for me!" I retorted, nettled by his airy manner. "Hard luck on me having to traipse at this time of night to a place I don't know to get orders you ought to have sent out."

"Yes, I know," he replied cheerfully. "We're awfully sorry, but it's the French division, you know. We've only just got the orders out of them. It's really their show. . . . And I'm afraid the first part of your orders have been sent off to the wrong place." Saying which, he led me into a large sombre room in which four or five officers sat immersed in papers and message forms. An elderly colonel looked up and nodded over his glasses. The young staff officer handed me some barrage maps and a quantity of typewritten operation orders.

"Zero-hour is 5.10 A.M.," he began, "and here is the part of your orders that has gone astray. I can't give you this copy. Will you take the orders down from this?"

I commenced writing out the operation order, and was struck to find that the barrage "lifts" were in hundreds of metres instead of hundreds of yards. "Yes, the French insisted on that," explained the staff lieutenant briskly.

"But we haven't metres on our range-drums," I said with an air of abandonment.

"Yes, I know, but the French insisted on it, because of their infantry. . . . Oh! there's a para. there about smoke-shells—that's important."

"The para. about smoke-shells is deleted . . . there will be no smoke-shells," put in the elderly colonel, looking up.

"Oh, is it, sir?" said the staff lieutenant, turning round.

"Yes; the correction has just come through."

"Right, sir."

I synchronised my watch, thrust the bundle of papers into my hip-pocket, and hurried away to find my horses. It was half-past one, and the attack was timed to start at 5.10. The colonel would require to deal with the orders, and the battery commanders would have but the barest time to work out their indi-

vidual "lifts." I started back at the gallop, skirting the side of the valley. I remember wishing to heaven that the clumps and hillocks of this part of France did not look so consistently alike. If only it were light enough for me to pick out the mustard field that lay a bright yellow landmark behind our chalk bank!

The colonel was in bed when I got back, but I held a candle while he read through the orders, and got out his ivory ruler, and apportioned a barrage lane to each battery. "Metres will have to become yards," was one of his remarks.

By twenty-to-three the orderlies had set out with the battle orders to the batteries, while I spoke on the telephone to an officer of each battery, and synchronised watches.

When I turned in, after a whisky-and-soda and a couple of biscuits, the colonel was fast asleep. I felt satisfied, however, that I had done my share that night towards beating the Hun.

By 7 A.M. we were up again, and until 7 P.M. the telephone buzzed continuously. It was a day of hard infantry fighting, of attacks that were held up and had to be renewed, of German counter-efforts to shift us from points won at the opening of our attack. All day long F.O.O.'s and liaison officers telephoned reports of changes in our front line, and five times I turned on our batteries to respond to S.O.S. calls. By the end of the day we held three parts of the ground that our Higher Command had planned to seize.

III.

There followed three months of varied kinds of soldiering: short spells holding the line, odd days in rest areas, quick shifts to other parts of the Front, occasional participation in carefully prepared raids on Hun trenches, one whole fortnight in a riverside village where even the Boche night-bombers did not come, and where we held a joyous race-meeting and a spit-and-polish horse show. There was the fresh burst by the Hun armies that seemed to spell the doom of Reims. We began to notice larger and larger bodies of arriving Americans, but did not expect them to be in the war on an impressive scale until 1918 was out. Leave to England remained at a standstill. The universal phrase of 1916 and 1917, "Roll on Duration," had almost entirely disappeared from the men's letters that came before me for censoring. Yet no one seemed depressed. Every one appeared possessed of a sane and calm belief that things would work out right in the long-run. We should just have to hold the Hun off this year, and by honest endeavour during training opportunities fit ourselves to fight with added effectiveness in 1919, when America would be pro-

perly in the field and the Allies' turn would come.

The second week in May the brigade, after a fourteen-mile march, came again into the land of rolling heights and sunken roads in which for three and a half years most of our fighting had been done. A "sausage" balloon anchored to the ground, a pumping-station and four square-shaped water-troughs, and a dozen or so shanties built of sandbags and rusted iron, dotted the green-and-brown landscape.

Waggon tracks had cut ugly brown ways through clover-fields and grasslands. A new system of trenches stretched to north and to south from the main road along which the brigade were moving. Men of the Labour Corps were stolidly filling shell-holes in the road surface with broken stones, and digging dump-holes for draining away the rain and mud torrents that were sure to come. A long dark wood crowned the ridge three miles in front of us. In the centre a slender spire tipped the tree-tops.

"That's Y—— Church," said Major Bullivant, with whom I was riding along the horse track at the side of the road. "Do you know the latest motto for the Labour Corps?" he added inconsequentially, looking down at a bespectacled man in khaki who eased up as we passed. "*Infra dig.*," he went on, with a humorous side glance, and without pausing for my answer.

Away to the east muffled boomings as if giants were shaking blankets. My mind turned to July 1916, when first I arrived in France and came along this very road at 3.30 one morning as the sun's rim began to peep above the long dark wood. How easy to recall that morning! I had brought fifty-three men from the Base, reinforcements for the Divisional Artillery, and half believed that the war could not proceed unless I delivered them to their destination in the shortest possible time; and my indignant keenness when I reached the village behind the long dark wood and learned that no one there knew anything about the two lorries that were to transport my party the remainder of the journey to the Front! Did I not rouse a frowning town major and two amazed sergeant-majors before 5 A.M. and demand that they should do something in the matter? And did not my fifty-three men eventually complete a triumphant pilgrimage in no fewer than thirteen ammunition lorries—to find that they and myself had arrived a day earlier than we were expected? And here was I again in the same stretch of country, and the British line not so far forward as it had been two years before.

We pitched tents and tethered our horses in the wood, and before nightfall I walked into the village to look at the spot beneath the church tower where I had halted my fifty-

three men, and to view again the barn in which I had roused the most helpful of the two sergeant-majors. Alas for the sentiment! All French villages seem much alike, with their mud-wall barns and tiled cottages, when you have passed through scores of them, as I have done since July 1916. I could not be certain of the building.

Coming back to our camp through the heart of the wood, I chanced upon a place of worship that only a being of fancy and imagination and devoutness could have fashioned. Inside a high oval hedge, close-woven with much patient labour, stood an altar made of banked-up turf, surmounted by a plain wooden cross. Turf benches to seat a hundred and fifty worshippers faced the altar. Above, the wind rustled softly through the branches of tall birches and larch trees, bent over until they touched, and made one think of Gothic arches. There was wonderful peace and rest in the place. Some one told me afterwards that the chaplain of a London division had built it. It was a happy thought.

. . . . . .

In the morning I went with the colonel through the village, and a mile and a half along a road leading east that for half a mile was lined with camouflage screens. "The Boche holds the ridge over there," remarked the colonel, stretching an arm towards high ground swathed in a blue haze five miles away. A painted notice-board told all and sundry that horse traffic was not permitted on the road until after dusk. We struck off to the left, dropped into a trench where we saw a red triangular flag flying, and said "Good-day" to the brigade-major of the infantry brigade who had made their headquarters at this spot. Then we got out of the trench again, and walked along the top until we came to what was to be our future home—the headquarters of the Australian Field Artillery Brigade that we were to relieve by 10 P.M. We received a cheery welcome from a plump, youngish Australian colonel, and a fair-haired adjutant with blue sparkling eyes.

When a brigade of artillery relieves another brigade of artillery, there is a ceremony, known as "handing-over," to be gone through. The outgoing brigade presents to the in-coming brigade maps and documents showing the positions of the batteries, the O.P.'s, the liaison duties with the infantry, the amount of ammunition to be kept at the gun positions, the zones covered, the S.O.S. arrangements, and similar information detailing daily work and responsibilities. I can recall no "hand-over" so perfect in its way as this one. The Australian Brigade's defence file was a beautifully arranged, typed document; and a child could have understood the indexing. True, the extent and number of their

headquarters staff was astonishing. Against our two clerks they had three clerks and a skilled draughtsman for map-making; also an N.C.O. whose sole *magnum opus* was the weekly compiling of Army Form B. 213. But there could be no doubt that they carried on war in a most business-like way.

The colonel went off with the Australian colonel to inspect the battery positions and view the front line from the O.P.'s, and sent me back to bring up our mess-cart and to arrange for the fetching of our kit. By tea-time we were properly installed; and indeed the Australian colonel and his adjutant remained as our guests at dinner.

The mess, cut out of the side of the trench and lined with corrugated iron, possessed an ingeniously manufactured door—part of a drum-tight wing of a French aeroplane. The officers' sleeping quarters were 30 feet below ground, in an old French dug-out, with steps so unequal in height that it was the prudent course to descend backwards with your hands grasping the steps nearest your chin.

The Australian colonel dipped his hand for the fifth time into the box of canteen chocolates that Manning had placed on the table with the port. "That's a nice Sam Browne of yours," he observed, noticing the gloss on our adjutant's belt.

"I hope you don't take a fancy to it, sir," replied our adjutant quickly. "We're all afraid of you, you know. I've put a double piquet on all our waggon lines for fear some of your fellows take a liking to our horses."

The Australian colonel and his adjutant laughed good-naturedly, and the colonel told us a story of a captain and a sergeant-major in another Australian brigade who were accomplished "looters."

One night the pair were hauling down a tent which they thought was empty, when a yell made them aware that an officer was sleeping in it. The captain took to his heels, but the sergeant-major was captured.

"The next day," concluded the Australian Colonel, "the captain had to go and make all sorts of apologies to get his sergeant-major off. The other people agreed, provided the officer ransomed him with half a dozen pit-props and ten sheets of corrugated iron. For a long time afterwards we used to chaff the captain, and tell him that he valued his sergeant-major at six pit-props and ten sheets of iron."

Hot sweltering days followed. Most mornings I spent at the O.P. watching our batteries' efforts to knock out suspected enemy trench mortars, or staring through my binoculars trying to pick out Boche transport, or fresh digging operations. The tramp back at midday along the communication trenches was boiling-hot going. I used to think "People working in Lon-

don will be pining just now for green fields and country air. For myself, I'd give anything for a cool ride on a London bus." In the afternoons there were reserve battery positions in case of a swift Hun advance to be reconnoitred, and gaps in the barbed-wire systems to be located, and bits of trenches that would have to be filled in to allow our waggons to cross. Divisional Artillery were insistent upon timed reports of hostile shelling, particularly gas shelling, and this formed another portion of my special work. One day intimation came from Division that Fentiman and Robson had been accepted for the Air Service. "It's the only way to get leave to England," said Robson jocularly. Fentiman's chief regret was that he would have to leave behind a mare that he had got from the Tank Corps. "She pulls so," he told me one afternoon when I met him jogging along the road, "that if I turned on to the grass at this moment and put spurs into her, she wouldn't stop till she got to Amiens. . . . No one in the Tank Corps has been able to pull her up under four miles, and only then when she came to a seven-foot hedge. . . . But I was beginning to understand her."

When I accompanied the colonel on his visits to the infantry brigades all the talk was of the training of the youngsters, who now formed so considerable a portion of the battalion strengths. "They are good stuff," I heard one of the brigadiers say, "and I keep drumming into them that they are fighting for England, and that the Boche mustn't gain another yard of ground." He was a fighter, this brigadier—although I have never yet met another officer who took it as a matter of course that his camp-bed should be equipped with linen sheets when he was living in the firing line.

About three-quarters of a mile from our headquarters was a tiny cemetery, set in a grove of trees on a bare hillside, sequestered, beautiful in its peacefulness and quiet. One morning, very early, I walked out to view it more closely. It had escaped severe shelling, although chipped tombstones and broken railings and scattered pieces of painted wire wreaths showed that the hell-blast of destruction had not altogether passed it by. I went softly into the little chapel. On the floor muddy, noisy-sleeping soldiers lay sprawled in ungainly attitudes. Rifles were piled against the wall; mess-tins and water-bottles lay even upon the altar. And somehow there seemed nothing incongruous about the spectacle, nothing that would hurt a profoundly religious mind. It was all part of the war.

And one night when I was restless, and even the heavy drugging warmth of the dug-out did not dull me to sleep, I climbed up into the open air. It was a lovely night. The long dark wood stood out black and distinct in the clear moonlight; the stars twinkled

in their calm abode. Suddenly a near-by battery of long-range guns cracked out an ear-splitting salvo. And before the desolating rush of the shells had faded from the ear a nightingale hidden among the trees burst into song. That also was part of the war.

IV.

During the month of June Brigade Headquarters retired from the trench dug-out and settled in the end house of the village, a white-walled, vine-clad building, with a courtyard and stables and a neat garden that only one Boche shell had smitten. On the door of the large room that we chose for the mess there still remained a request in French, written in a clear painstaking hand, that billeted officers should keep to the linoleum strips laid across the carpet when proceeding to the two inner rooms. But there was no linoleum now, and no carpet. On the otherwise bare wall was hung a massively-framed portrait of the proprietor—a clean-shaven middle-aged Frenchman of obviously high intelligence. A family press-cutting album contained an underlined report from a local newspaper of a concert given in the village on June 6, 1914:—

Très remarque le duo de mandoline avec accompagnement de violon executé par trois gracieuses jeunes filles qui font à chacune de nos soirées admirer par les amateurs du beau, leur talent d'artiste!

I gathered that the three young girls were daughters of the house; I also noted that *trois gracieuses jeunes filles* was doubly underlined.

One of our servants used to be a professional gardener, and in a couple of days he had weeded the paths and brought skill and knowledge to bear on the neglected vegetable beds. We had excellent salad from that garden and fresh strawberries, while there were roses to spare for the tall vases on the mantelpiece in the mess; and before we came away our gardener had looked to the future and planted lettuce and turnips and leeks, and even English pansies. The Boche gunners never got a line on to this house, and though aeroplanes cruised above us every night not a single bomb dropped near.

The town major, a learned and discursive subaltern, relieved on account of rheumatic troubles from more strenuous duties with an infantry regiment, joined our mess and proved a valuable addition. He was a talented mathematician whose researches had carried him to where mathematics soar into the realms of imagination; he had a horror of misplaced relatives, and possessed a reliable palate in the matter of red wines. One dinner-time he talked himself out on the possibilities of the

metric system, and pictured the effects of a right angle with a hundred instead of ninety degrees. Another night he walked me up and down the garden until 2 A.M. expatiating on astronomy. He tried to make me realise the beyond-comprehension remoteness of the new star by explaining that astronomers did not calculate its distance from the earth in thousands of miles. "Light travels at 186,000 miles a second; to astronomers the new star is 2000 years away," he concluded.

As I have said, he was a valuable addition to our mess. One day he took me to a neighbouring village and introduced me to a fat comfortable-looking maire, who spread his hands on his capacious knees and invited us to try a cooling nip of absinthe. After which he produced from a small choice store a bottle of fifty-years-old brandy, and made the town major take it away in token of a friendship that began in the way-back days of 1915.

All this may not sound like war, but I am trying to write down some of the average daily happenings in a field-artillery brigade that has seen as much service as any brigade in the new armies.

For several days Wilde, the signalling officer, and the doctor conducted an acrid argument that arose from the doctor's astounding assertion that he had seen a Philadelphia base-ball player smite a base-ball so clean and hard that it travelled 400 yards before it pitched. Wilde, with supreme scorn, pointed out that no such claim had been made even for a golf ball. The doctor made play with the names of Speaker, Cobb, and other transatlantic celebrities. Then one day Wilde rushed into the mess flourishing a London Sunday paper that referred in glowing terms to a mighty base-ball hit of 136 yards, made on the Woolwich Arsenal football ground; after which the doctor retired to cope with the plague of boils that had descended upon the brigade. This and a severe outbreak of Spanish 'flue provided him with a regular hundred patients a day. He himself had bitter personal experience of the boils. We never saw him without one for ten weeks. His own method of dealing with their excruciating tenderness was to swathe his face in cotton-wool and sticking-plaster. "Damn me, doctor, if you don't look like a loose imitation of Von Tirpitz," burst out the adjutant one day, when the doctor, with a large boil on either side of his chin, appeared plastered accordingly.

By July we had side-stepped north and were housed in a chateau that really deserved the appellation, though it was far from being as massively built as an average English country seat of like importance. It belonged to one of the oldest families in France. Wide, noble staircases led to vast rooms made untenable by shell fire. Fragments of rare stained glass littered the

vacant private chapel. The most valuable paintings, the best of the Louis XV. furniture, and the choicest tapestry had been removed to safety. In one room I entered some bucolic wag had clothed a bust of Venus in a lance-corporal's cap and field-service jacket, and affixed a box-respirator in the alert position. We made the mess in what had been the nursery, and the adjutant and myself slept in bunks off an elaborately mined passage, in making which British tunnellers had worked so hard that cracks showed in the wall above, and the whole wing appeared undecided whether or not to sink. We learned that there were two schools of opinion regarding the safety of the passage. The Engineers of one division thought the wing would not subside; some equally competent Engineers shook their heads and said no civil authority would dream of passing the passage as safe. The adjutant and myself relied upon the optimists; at any rate, we should be safe from the Hun gunners, who treated the chateau as one of their datum points.

We were relieving an Army Field Artillery Brigade commanded by a well-known scientific gunner, and on the afternoon that we arrived he took the colonel and myself on an explanatory tour of the battery positions and the "O.P.'s." They were leaving their guns in position for us to use. There was a corps standing order that steel helmets should be worn and box-respirators kept in the alert position in this part of the line. So first we girded up ourselves in compliance with orders. Then our guide made us walk in single file and keep close to the houses as we walked along the main street. "He has a beautiful view of the chateau gates and can see movement in the centre of the road," he informed us.

It was a terribly battered village. The church tower had been knocked out of shape. Roofs that had escaped being smashed in were threadbare, or seemed to be slipping off skeleton houses. Mutilated telegraph-poles and broken straggly wires, evil-smelling pools of water, scattered bricks, torn roadways, and walls blackened and scarred by bomb and shell, completed a scene of mournfulness and desolation. We passed one corner house on the shutters of which some "infanteers" had chalked the inviting saucy sign, "Ben Jonson's Café." Then we struck across a fast-ripening wheatfield and put up a mother partridge who was agonised with fear lest we should discover her young ones. "It will be a pity if these crops can't be gathered in," remarked our colonel. To right and left of us, and beyond the ruined village that lay immediately in front, were yellow fields ready for the harvesters. "Does he shell much?" continued the colonel.

"Not consistently," replied the other colonel. "I don't think he does much observed shooting. He's copying our

method of sudden bursts of fire, though."

We inspected two O.P.'s on one side of the wide valley that led towards the front line, picked up, through binoculars, the chief reference points in Bocheland, and had a look at two heavily-camouflaged anti-tank guns that were a feature of the defence in this part of the front. Myriads of fat overfed flies buzzed in the trenches through which we passed. Hot and dusty, we came back about 6 P.M., and entered the chateau kitchen-garden through a hole that had been knocked in the high, ancient, russet-red brick wall. The sudden scent of box and of sweet-smelling herbs roused a tingling sense of pleasure and of recollection. I never failed afterwards to return to the chateau by that way.

The other colonel came out with us again next morning, although our batteries were now in possession, and his own officers and men had gone a long way back. He wanted to show our colonel some observation points from the O.P. on the other side of the valley.

A certain incident resulted. As we passed B Battery's position we saw Dumble, the battery captain, looking through the dial-sight of his No. 1 gun, apparently trying to discover whether a black-and-white signalling-pole, planted fifty yards in front of the gun, was in line with a piece of hop-pole fifty yards farther on. Both colonels stared fixedly at the spectacle. "What's become of the aiming-posts?" said the other colonel, puzzled and stern.

When a gun has fired satisfactorily on a certain target, which is also a well-defined point on the map, and it is desired to make this particular line of fire the standard line, or, as it is commonly called, the zero line, the normal method is to align two aiming-posts with such accuracy that no matter what other targets are fired upon, the gun can always be brought back to its zero line by means of the aiming-posts. Absolute accuracy being essential, the aiming-posts are specially designed and are of a settled pattern. Judge of the two colonels' astonishment then when they perceived Dumble's impromptu contrivance.

"Have you no aiming-posts?" our colonel asked Dumble sharply.

"No, sir, the other battery would not leave theirs behind. I had understood it was arranged that we should hand over ours at the waggon line, and that they should leave theirs here to give us the lines of fire."

"Of course," interrupted the other colonel; "but what are you doing now? You can't get your line with those things."

"I'm trying to do the best I can, sir, until my own aiming-posts arrive."

"Yes, but it's hopeless trying to fix those ridiculous things in the same positions as the aiming-posts. Who was it gave the order to remove the aiming-posts?"

"The subaltern who was waiting for us to relieve your battery, sir."

"The battery commander wasn't here then?"

"No, sir. I believe he'd gone on ahead to the waggon lines."

"I'm exceedingly sorry this has happened," said the other colonel, turning to our colonel. "I'll have the battery commander and the other officer up here at once, and they can go forward with your officer when he registers the guns again. It's disgraceful. I'll stop their next leave for this." He disappeared into the battery telephone pit to send through orders for the recalling of the delinquent officers.

"Not a bad idea to make an inspection round the day after you have handed over," remarked our colonel to me drily. "This is rather an instructive example."

These were our last days of waiting and wondering whether the Boche would attack; of the artillery duels and the minor raids by which each side sought to feel and test the other's strength. I recall two or three further incidents of our stay in that part of the line. The G.O.C., R.A., of Corps decided that a rare opportunity presented itself for training junior officers in quick picking up of targets, shooting over open sights, and voice-command of batteries from near sighting-places where telephone wires could be dispensed with and orders shouted through a megaphone. "It will quite likely come to that," he observed. "The next fighting will be of the real open warfare type, and the value of almost mechanical acquaintance with drill is that the officer possessing such knowledge can use all his spare brains to deal with the changing phases of the actual battle." So a single 18-pdr. used to be pulled out for practice purposes, and generals and infantry officers used to come to see gunner subalterns schooled and tested. It was better practice than Shoeburyness or Larkhill, because though the shoots were carried out on the gunnery school model the shells were directed at real targets. During one series a distinguished red-tabbed party was dispersed because the Hun did an area strafe in front, behind, and around the single gun. Another time the descent of an 8-inch saved the *amour propre* of a worried second lieutenant, who, after jockeying with his angle of sight, had got into abject difficulties with his range and correction.

One morning I was up forward carrying out instructions to keep in daily touch with the infantry battalions, finding out their requirements, and discovering what new artillery targets they could suggest. As it was also my business to know what the Heavies were doing, I stopped at an O.P. in a trench to ask a very young R.G.A. officer observing for a 6-inch how such questions as what he had fired upon that

morning, and whether he had noted any fresh Boche movement. I had passed along the winding trench and descended the dug-out headquarters of one of our infantry battalions, and was inquiring if the commanding officer had any suggestions or complaints to make, when the boyish R.G.A. officer came down the steps and, not noticing me in the dim candlelight, asked in hurried tones: "Excuse me, sir, but could you identify an artillery officer who said he was coming here. He stopped and asked me some extraordinary questions . . . and" — hesitatingly — "you have to be careful talking to people in the front line."

The adjutant and the intelligence officer of the infantry battalion were smiling broadly. Finally the colonel had to laugh. "Yes," he said, "I can identify the artillery officer. Here he is. You haven't discovered a spy this time."

The young officer looked abashed, and when later I passed his "O.P.," apologised with much sincerity. I replied by asking him to have a good look at me, so that he wouldn't mistake me next time we met. After which we both laughed. We did meet again, not long afterwards, and in much more exciting circumstances.

When the brigade left that part of the line Marshal Foch had begun his momentous counter-effort between Soissons and Château-Thierry. In a very short time we also were to be engaged in a swift and eventful movement that changed the whole tenor of the war: a time of hard, ceaseless fighting, countless episodes of heroism and sacrifice, and vivid, conquering achievement.

(*To be continued.*)

EXPERIENCES OF A WAR BABY.

BY ONE.

CHAPTER I.—NURSERY DAYS.

THE dawn of Armageddon, or in more prosaic language the outbreak of war, found me a very young cadet. In fact, so great was the juniority of my term that we were not included in the grand rush to sea which occurred when Dartmouth College mobilised. Much to our disappointment, September 1914 found us returning to a new term at Osborne, as though war had not so much as been rumoured.

This impression did not last long. On our arrival at the College the changes were evident on every side. All the officers had, of course, left at one fell swoop, and were now in ships all over the world. For instance, the lieutenant of my term during the summer before was now serving in a battleship in the "grey North Sea"; whilst the Engineer-lieutenant, who had been second officer of my term, instructing us in engineering and coaching our Rugby XV, was in a cruiser in the South Atlantic. Their places had been taken by "temporary" officers and by the masters who, to their chagrin, were kept from more active participation in the war to teach us.

These masters have a thankless task. They knock an immense amount of knowledge into a ceaselessly changing crowd of cadets in a minimum space of time. These cadets then go to sea, and are temporarily lost sight of. One fine day they turn up at the College, seemingly only a few months after they left, with the stripes of a Sub. or more, and possibly a D.S.C. to their credit. They are pleased to take tea with their former "tutor," and regale him with spicy stories of a life on the ocean wave as seen from big ships, destroyers, submarines, mine-sweepers, &c. Their visit is but a fleeting one, for leave is short. They return to their ships, leaving their "tutors" to continue to drum the same old knowledge into yet another younger set of cadets. This is undoubtedly work of the highest national importance, but truly it is "work behind the scenes" and out of the limelight. All honour to them.

As the object of this narrative is not the paying of pretty compliments but the statement of cold facts, we will return to the subject of us—the cadets. We found that we were under the charge of two masters, but contrary to our hopes there was no material alteration in the discipline. Everything was carried on in the usual routine. The place of the Commander who was in general charge of the cadets when not

at instruction was filled by a retired captain. This officer was of no great age, though fate and the Admiralty had sent him to this job ashore. He let us see that there was going to be no change. To employ a popular phrase, "he shook us to the core."

However, before things really settled down there were some comic scenes. Most of these occurred at "divisions," or parade, in the morning. For this performance each term falls in, is inspected by an officer, reported "present" to the Commander, manœuvred into position for prayers, and afterwards marched away to the work of the day. At Osborne we were rather proud of our marching. Indeed, the two sights which were said to impress the visitors most were our method of dancing the lancers on Saturday night and our wonderful marching at Sunday divisions (a super affair). The latter was carried out in packed formation, and when in file the chest of one cadet touched the back of his next ahead, whilst our concerted tread shook the floor. Consequently, if something went wrong with the works, such as a wrong order, this famous scene would be rapidly transformed into a fair representation of the former. On one occasion a master gave an order to his term of "One pace forward, march." This was all right, but being dissatisfied with his new position, he gave the order, "Take another." The effect on the ranks was a gentle ripple. Still this era soon passed, and in a couple of weeks one would have thought that all the masters were retired sergeant-majors.

Work took on a pretty serious tone as well. Of course, at all times in a naval college the authorities take a very close personal interest in the quantity and quality of your work. If they think that they are not getting their money's worth, they warn you to try harder. If you do not improve, out you go to a hard and bitter world to explain to your people that you think a naval life will not suit your delicate constitution, and to seek employment elsewhere. Now they said to themselves, "War is war," and proceeded to pile on a good bit extra so that we might be got ready for sea in as short a time as possible. Most of the extra work was interesting and a great deal of it practical, so the hardship was not so great.

That term passed fairly quickly and without incident. After thirteen days' leave at Christmas, instead of the usual four weeks, we joined the R.N.C., Dartmouth, on New Year's Day 1915. Here we found ourselves under a lieutenant who had retired before the war, but had joined up again. However, his remembrance of Service manners and customs and their application was by no means hazy. It was said that he could perform a very difficult feat. He would place a cushion on the back of a chair, chalk a light cane

and hit that cushion after the style of a certain rite, which I believe is still in existence at some of our best schools even in this cultured age, and whose origin is a misguided remark by King Solomon. If you examined that cushion carefully, it was said that after half a dozen strokes you could only see one mark. I may say that I have no first-hand evidence, and that I steered clear of that cane. If any one who reads this is of a nervous disposition or is likely to meet this "ogre," I may also say that during the whole time we were under his charge only three people felt that stick, and that he kept us in rattling good order by sheer personality.

In addition to this he was a physical training fiend, and paid us the compliment of devoting a great deal of his attention to us. I cannot say that we were properly appreciative, though the Captain used to bring his guests to see our class give an exhibition of arm raising and knee bending, &c. Still, it made us very strong, and as a direct result we walked away with nearly every cup there was to be had. It also helped to keep us remarkably fit, for the work craze grew more popular term by term.

The term senior to us left during our second term at the College, and after envious glances at these lucky people with their midshipmen's patches, we turned to with our work, for we would be the next to go. That the authorities fully realised this we had no reason to doubt. They cut down general education to a minimum, and piled on specialist knowledge. It was fairly hard, but not too bad. Also our leave was not stinted, for, after the curtailed Christmas leave, we got our full allowances.

Of course, the question every one was asking was, "When are we going to sea?" Many and varied were the theories, rumours, and "authenticated news" on the subject. Our pessimists said "not till after the war." Even our optimists said "in a year or so." It came as splendid news, therefore, when, at the beginning of our third term, we were told that this would be our last term at the College. Mr Shieve's representative came in for a hot time when he visited the College. Queues used to wait on him to order new uniforms, try on ditto, order new caps (for midshipmen wear a different shaped cap to cadets), and endless other gear.

Finally came the passing-out examinations. These are a horrible three days' nightmare on which the seniority is based, and on which much depends. For instance, I am now entitled to get into a boat after and get out of a boat before one of my term mates in this ship, all because I was two places higher in the passing-out list. Our gun-rooms were strangely silent during the intervals, for, instead of playing the ass, people were furtively cramming themselves with eleventh hour

knowledge, or sitting with eyes closed repeating to themselves—

"$\frac{1}{R}=\frac{1}{R_1}+\frac{1}{R_2}+\frac{1}{R_3}+$et-cetera,"

or things of that sort.

We struggled through the examinations somehow, and with them our troubles ended. That night we had a dance, and the next morning we left the College for good. I do not think there was one of us who was not sorry to leave. We had had an extremely good time there. We parted with our term lieutenant with more than ordinary regret. He in his turn paid us the tribute of swearing by us to the terms who were subsequently under his charge. Still, we were going off into the unknown, to do our bit in the great war. To celebrate the event we had a good burst up in the train. We smoked as hard as we could, indulged in personal comment on porters and guards, and left behind us a track of angry old gentlemen, the targets of our crack pea-shooter experts. In many ways it was as well that our train was fast. Then we split up for "a drop of leaf" before joining ships of the Grand Fleet as midshipmen.

CHAPTER II.—HOME AND ITS OCCUPANTS.

After a gloriously extended period of idleness I received my appointment as midshipman of His Majesty's Ship *Penultimate*, with orders to write to her Commanding Officer and request the date and place of joining. I accordingly secured a sheet of foolscap paper, without which no Service letter would be correct, and Mr Shieve's own book of 'Service Etiquette.'

This invaluable book is the "about to join midshipman's" guide, philosopher, and friend. It tells him what to do, how and when to do it during the trying time of actually joining. It gives the exact sum he ought to spend during one month, with details of how the money should go. In passing, it should be mentioned that any midshipman who could stick to that would be wasted in the Service; he ought to don a pair of wings and float away to paradise. Still the book contains almost every bit of information required by a very young war baby who is in the transformation stage between the nursery and the cold bitter world. It even gives him the correct method of drawing up a communication to gentlemen in high places asking for information on certain knotty points. One form gives him the correct service method of applying for a bed and breakfast with attendance. It would be quite wrong to write an ordinary letter expressing his views and wishes, and requesting a reply by return of post. He must express himself in official phraseology—"have the hon-

our to be" some one's "obedient servant," &c. Truly the book is a boon to the young and ignorant.

I selected the blank form which dealt with my troubles, copied it out, and despatched it, receiving in reply orders to report myself at a place north of the equator, on the —th day of —— 1916. I accordingly collected my gear, had myself photographed, and made my way to the station the evening before the magic date. Here I met several other members of my term who were also joining the *Penultimate*, so we formed quite a cheerful party. Amidst the cheers of our relations and a few porters who had benefited to some extent by their part in the proceedings, we launched forth into the unknown.

After an all-night journey we arrived at our destination, and proceeded to report. To tell the truth, we spent the whole forenoon reporting, for each new person to whom we went pushed us off somewhere else. In the end we reached a person who told us that our ship was not in harbour, but would be arriving the next day, and that in the meantime we might go to the barracks. To the barracks we went, and, young and frightened though we were, we were able to enjoy ourselves fairly well. Officers with many stripes were kind to us, and we found other people of our own rank at the barracks for training. We had the pleasure of watching them marched off to work whilst we sat in arm-chairs in the smoking-room and did nothing. That night we had to sling our own hammocks, and made an awful mess of it. The next afternoon the ship came in, so we and our gear were collected and taken down to join her.

My first impressions of the ship were not very striking. She looked very large, with her two great funnels and masts towering above the surrounding sheds, but that was only to be expected. I remember, curiously enough, being disappointed with the size of her 15-inch guns. They looked no bigger than the 12-inch I had seen during visits to ships in my school-days. It was only when I started to learn the number of spaces, stores, and flats, and the amount of gear in her, that her tremendous size began to impress me.

We trooped aboard like a flock of sheep, and were received by a tall, bored-looking officer with a telescope under his arm, who chided us for our failure to salute the Quarter-Deck. This person we knew, from former experience, to be the officer of the watch. Having all been assiduous students of Mr Shieve's drill-book (alias 'Service Etiquette'), we knew our part of the programme. Marching up to him in a body, we saluted, and in a chorus informed him, "Mr ——, come on board to join, sir."

"Right," said the O.O.W., "come below and see the Commander," and with the O.O.W. at our head we trooped aft to the "Bloke's" cabin.

The Commander was busy

interviewing dockyard officials, and was in no fit state to receive anybody. He greeted the glad news of our arrival with little ceremony, but just said, "Take the young d—ils to the gun-room." Accordingly the procession re-formed, and after a journey mostly, in our opinions, up and down very steep ladders, we arrived at the gun-room.

As most people know, the gun-room is the habitat of the junior officers of a ship. Many descriptions of gun-rooms have been written; indeed it is the one part of a ship which every writer on naval matters feels bound to describe. The place is described as the "home of the jolly care-free middies," or words to that effect. From any of these descriptions the reader would gather that midshipmen were gay, saucy little fellows with treble voices, who were always up to some prank or other. Why this should be I do not know. I have never read a book which described a public school boy of from sixteen upwards as such; and yet are we so very different, so very much more juvenile than public school boys? I should say rather the opposite. The first thing a midshipman is taught on coming to sea is to command men and to take on responsibility. Especially is this the case in war time, when there may be no passengers in a ship's complement, but each and every one must take his share in making and keeping her efficient. In many ways the midshipman becomes prematurely aged and "grown up," when compared with a boy of his age ashore. Yet the old tradition remains. "Middies" they are, and "middies" I expect they will remain. Still, reader, if you believe the popular version, do not be surprised if you meet a six-foot midshipman with a blue chin. The type is not unknown.

For all this rigmarole, I am not pretending that they are young demigods, or, in the ordinary sense of the word, smug. Far be it from me to label myself as a liar of the first water. On a good night in the gun-room you can find enough spirits to please any one. A gun-room chorus once heard is never forgotten. But the noise which that chorus makes is less like an orphanage choir than a collection of French horns gone wild.

Our gun-room complement was a fairly typical one. There were two sub-lieutenants who were responsible for our good conduct in a general way. The senior of them was the permanent mess president, and he it was who wielded the rod of cane, and made it uncomfortable for us to sit down when we wandered from the straight and narrow path. In addition to this duty, he was responsible for everything to do with the mess. His position was no sinecure, and I pray that I may never be thrust into a like position. He was even responsible for the mess accounts, though for this duty he got the help

of the Assistant Paymaster, who was the only other "striped" officer in the mess. Next after these came six senior midshipmen fresh from the Dardanelles, where they had seen life with a capital L. They were quite the war-worn heroes of the ship, and divided their time between lording it over us and working for their examinations. They were nearly due for promotion, and, whilst they were fighting, there had been little time to spare for their instruction. Hence the hard way in which they worked. Lastly came we six war products, who, but for his Imperial Majesty the Kaiser, would still have been cadets in the middle of our Dartmouth course, but now, by the grace of God, were midshipmen in His Majesty's Fleet.

The first thing for us to do was to learn something about the ship, and this, for such landsmen as we, was no easy business. To start with, the mere business of getting about the ship presented difficulties. All the hatches have coamings or ridges round them, whilst all the doors have high steps. These are fitted to prevent water from forming waterfalls down hatches or from running from one compartment to another, and also to make a good water-tight joint when the hatches or doors are closed. But they form a great obstacle for the unwary. Many were the times when, proceeding at high speed through a door, you would forget the high step, and would either change from the vertical to the horizontal with considerable force, or have to clutch wildly to save yourself. Another great difficulty for the novice is the steepness and slipperiness of the ladders. Often you would see a newly-joined person step daintily on to a ladder, walk down a couple of steps, and then there would be a clatter. If you looked down the hatch you would see our hero seated at the bottom in a blue cloud of profanity, having finished his journey with more speed than dignity on that part of his person designed for arm-chairs and punishment.

After a time you get used to stepping high through doors and keeping your balance on the most slippery of ladders. Then when you chance to go on leave, and people see you walking through a door over a threshold of about two inches with a step like a prize pony, they wonder what you are playing at. They have not passed through the same trials as you.

There are many other difficulties which beset the newly joined. A ship is a maze of compartments, flats, and passages, all of which, for your own safety, you must know. If the ship is torpedoed, you must be able to get on deck. If the commander tells you to get him a fathom and a half of cod-line, you must know where to get it. In an action you may be the only person in the position

to put out a fire: you must learn how to set about it, where to get the water, and which hatches to close to prevent the fire spreading. The acquirement of all this knowledge requires an effort, especially in your first ship. All ships are constructed on roughly the same principle, and have roughly the same gear. After learning what to expect in your first ship, it is a far simpler matter to find the same things in subsequent ships, and it is then merely a question of getting the local knowledge.

So much for the general knowledge of the ship. As I have already said, the correct thing for me to do would be to describe the gun-room. Our gun-room was not unlike an ordinary gun-room, and, as I cannot describe it half so well as the other writers, I will have a try at the ward-room.

The ward-room is the abode of the senior officers. It consists of two rooms, the feeding chamber and the cagging[1] chamber. The former is a more or less ordinary dining-room, with two large tables, a piano, and a bar. It is an uninteresting-looking place, and, if you except the bar, quite featureless. When the tables are cleared away it makes a fairly good night club. The place of the argument is more interesting to look at. There is a stove and fireplace, round which are grouped a sofa and two arm-chairs. Round two walls runs a settee. On one wall you will find three scuttles in a neat orderly row. These are not for coal, but for light and air. In the merchant service they are nicknamed port-holes; ashore, windows. The room is also tastefully decorated with pictures of fair young ladies, an electric cigar-lighter (to save matches), and a telephone.

Entering at eventide you will find all the scuttles tight shut, and the air a blue haze of tobacco smoke. In and around the fireplace you will see a number of grim-featured men of few years but great experience. Their whole demeanour, their ease of bearing and the fluency of their language, will suggest their calling. Yes, reader, they are naval officers. They are engaged in a naval "cag." All of them are speaking, none of them is listening. The only exception to this rule is the officer in the starboard arm-chair. He is asleep. The gentleman in the fireplace, with the hooked nose and the careless blue eye, has got a moan. He was fined half-a-crown by the guardians of the peace for sitting down to his breakfast after the hour of 8.30 A.M. He explains at length to the gathering that he had had the middle, that his servant had forgotten to call him, and that when he had got up his shaving-water was cold. This priceless gem of a moan is lost, because, as I said before, no one is listening. From the port arm-chair come a string of

[1] Cag = argument, discussion.

remarks on the occupant's play on the local links that afternoon. The pair on the sofa are arguing about the price of fish. The chorus round have got half a dozen other topics under way.

In a secluded corner a game of bridge is in progress. The game is played in accordance with service custom, and, as the ward-room is the abode of senior officers, I must, from instincts of self-preservation, draw a veil over the scene at this point. If, after this vivid description, you cannot picture to yourself the place I have not yet inhabited, well—try again.

I will not attempt to describe the men. They are of so many different types that it would require a far more skilled pen to represent a war-time lower deck. For instance, my servant was, before the war, a clerk in an insurance office. He is now a bandsman. I leave it at that. But, though the types are many and varied, the blend of them all, officers and men, produces the happy and efficient ships' companies that have made the navy what it is.

CHAPTER III.—AT SEA.

Once, whilst on leave from the ship, I was asked, "Is it true that the Grand Fleet is always at sea?" The correct answer, to avoid giving information to the enemy, would, I suppose, have been, "I do not know." However, at the time, I admitted that this was not the case, pointing out that, whilst maintaining a "ceaseless vigil" (to quote the daily papers), it was necessary to replenish with fuel, provisions, &c., and that this was impossible on a large scale at sea. Since then I have discovered why a number of people think that we are always "at sea." Reading a description in a newspaper of a visit to the fleet by an eminent personage, I came across the following passage: "After inspecting some men ashore he boarded a destroyer and proceeded 'to sea' to where the ships were lying in long lines, stretching far away into the mist," &c. Now, these ships were lying in harbour about a mile from the shore, and were thus in no naval sense "at sea." "At sea" in this sense is apparently the same thing as "floating," and undoubtedly the fleet is always floating, or we should now, in all probability, be a German colony. In this chapter I am going to try to give my impressions on the occasion when we first went to sea in the naval sense.

The day is a cold one and a steady wind is blowing; not a gale, but a brisk wind with promise of more to follow. It is a Saturday, and consequently a "make and mend" for the midshipmen and sailors. Some of our bravest spirits have gone ashore armed with golf clubs to settle their differences on the local links, the worst in the kingdom,

I am told. Others, of less enduring fibre, are keeping warm. From two arm-chairs in the gun-room rise puffs of smoke as two senior members of the mess enjoy pipes of peace. From the third arm-chair and from the whole length of the settee come heavy breathing and melodious snores, both evidence that the occupants have abandoned care and worry and are taking a "Service" make and mend. At the central table sit a couple of midshipmen writing hard at note-books, which have to be brought up to date before inspection on the morrow. The scene is completed by a few babes who are unobtrusively reading in corners.

Upon this peaceful scene bursts a bright-faced boy of some sixteen autumns and a winter, with bright blue eyes and fingers to match, for he has been on watch in the cold for an hour. He is the midshipman of the watch. He pauses dramatically; then, with a regrettable ignorance of grammar, remarks—

"A signal has just come through to raise steam for umpty knots and report when ready to proceed, and the second picket-boat is called away."

Then follows a hubbub.

"What is it all about?" "Is it a stunt?" "Are the Huns out?" "What time are we getting under way?" "Which watch takes the ship to sea?" &c., *ad. lib.*, from the babies.

Some of the sleepers are woken up, and after some profanity, resultant of a fat head, they join in the noise. The result is a fair imitation of a dog-fight. Majesty and might from the arm-chair is aroused from his meditations and soon cuts it short.

"Knock off that infernal din or get outside," he orders. He has been through this performance some hundreds of times since the war began, and it leaves him quite cold though grumbling. He had the middle last night, and was hoping for a good "lie in" to-night. There is never any rest for the wicked. He knocks out his pipe, turns over, and goes to sleep.

Not so our young enthusiasts. They take the second alternative, and flock on to the quarter-deck, where they must see the signal, ask everybody impossible questions, and generally make nuisances of themselves.

They are not the only people who take an interest in the current events. Away goes the picket-boat to recall our athletic brethren from their idle frolics to the stern duties of war. There are also strident bugle calls, and men begin to tumble up from down below, many of them freshly awakened from their make-and-mend caulk,[1] and dishevelled in consequence. Hands are fallen in, reported "present" to the commander, and detailed for work. All harbour gear must be unrigged and stowed away below. All loose gear on the upper deck must be lashed down, for the North Sea is seldom ladylike, and is apt to

[1] Caulk = snooze.

come on board even large battleships in considerable quantities. Once aboard, it is really wonderful what a lot of damage she can do in a short space of time. Then all upper-deck hatches and ventilating outlets and inlets must be closed down, to prevent the water getting between decks, where it is a serious nuisance. Life is hardly worth while, when you have to eat, sleep, and spend your whole time off watch with a couple of inches of water slopping about under you and round your feet. Having secured gear on deck, the main derrick is swung over the side, and the boats are hoisted in and lashed down in their crutches. There is a continuous hum and clatter on the upper deck.

The engine-room people too are as busy as beavers. The smoke from the funnels shows that steam is being raised. You see an overalled figure dash up a hatch with beads of perspiration and a worried look on his face. He hurries past you without even noticing that you are there, and bolts down another hatch into a gloomy-looking cavern, whence hisses, wails, and grunts are proceeding. Under his tender caress the wails are soothed, the hisses are squashed, and the grunts are increased. In other words, the pump is started on its task, which will only be completed when once more we are at peace. Everywhere there is hurry and bustle, for we must be the first ship to report "Ready for sea."

Presently there come more bugle calls, followed by pipes from the boatswain's mates and call boys. His majesty rises from his arm-chair by the gun-room fireplace, stretches himself, and goes away to test his guns. He is in charge of a group of the secondary armament, whose duty it is to deal hardly with any U-lamb which tries to harass us with "mouldies." It seldom falls to the lot of a battleship to fight thrilling encounters with submarines. We keep destroyers for the purpose, and they are altogether too successful in frightening away the intruders. Still, there may be a chance this time, and nothing can be left to chance.

When this is over there comes a little peace, interrupted by the increasing hum as more and more auxiliary engines are set going. Then the bugle calls and piping start again with redoubled vigour.

"Side party on the forecastle." "Navigating party close up," &c. On the forecastle a knot of men, the "side party," begin to gather. The first lieutenant comes forward, and a chief stoker reports to him, "Capstan ready for working, sir." The hose for washing cables is turned on, and presently, in accordance with a signal, the cable comes clanking in, link by link, as we "shorten in to three shackles."

Up on the bridge the scene has become animated. There is a collection of gilded hats on "monkeys' island," the service name for the highest bridge, from which the ship is conned.

The captain and the navigator are talking learnedly on the probable cause of this "flap."[1] The bridge simply hums with signalmen and staff people, who include the midshipman of the watch, and the navigator's assistant, known as "Tanky."

There comes a ring at a telephone which rouses the midshipman of the watch to action. Presently he comes back, salutes the captain, and says, "Engine-room report that they are ready to proceed, sir." The captain nods to an expectant signalman, and a hoist of flags climb to the yard-arm, the signal which tells the admiral that the *Penultimate* is prepared to do or die. In acknowledgment the flagship hoists a single flag. Shortly afterwards a signal hoist appears at the flagship's mast-head.

"Signal to weigh, sir," reports the signalman.

"Weigh," shouts the captain through his megaphone to the forecastle. The clanking of the cable, which had ceased when we had shortened in to three shackles, is resumed.

"Anchor's aweigh, sir," reports the signalman a little later in response to a signal from the forecastle.

Another signal is hoisted by the flagship. "Four single line ahead, sir, speed twelve knots." The captain nods to the navigator, who gives a number of orders down a voice-pipe. The ship vibrates, wriggles as though loth to go, and then slowly gathers way. Then comes the swish of water along the ship's side, and we are off.

We will take a look at the gun-room some hours later. Dinner is in progress, and despite the motions of the ship, the natives, with a couple of newly-joined exceptions, are enjoying it as much as in harbour. Every couple of minutes there comes a crash as an extra big sea hits our side of the ship, followed by a rattle as water runs off the upper deck down the side and back to its home. The ship gives a lurch, and plates, dishes, glasses, &c., slide rapidly across the table in a determined effort to reach the deck. The attempt is checked and held by the owners as far as possible, whilst domestics dash here and there stemming the charge of a flower-pot which looks likely to achieve its objective, or removing a water-jug which, instead of sliding with the rest, has decided to remain stationary and make a determined effort to upset. This kind of thing, though tending to lengthen the meal, adds a touch of excitement to the proceeding. The motion of the *Penultimate* is slow, steady, and not unpleasant when one gets used to it.

Dinner over, the port goes round, and after "the King" has been drunk, the president taps the table, rises, and addresses the meeting.

"Gentlemen," he says, "this being Saturday night at sea, I

[1] Flap = a disturbance of routine.

ask you to drink the old service toast. Gentlemen: Sweethearts and wives."

The toast is drunk with all the gallantry for which our jolly Jack Tars are famous. One officer even attempts to embrace his next-door neighbour as a substitute for his loved one far away across the tumbling waves, until called to order by the president.

After a suitable pause the table is again tapped, and Mr President, assuming a judicial air, takes up the tale.

"In accordance with service tradition, I call on the youngest member of the mess to reply to the toast. Mr Tinietot will make a suitable response on behalf of the sweethearts and wives."

At the lower end of the table a small youth rises. The awful moment, in expectation of which he has sat quivering all the evening, has come. Still he has been well primed with appropriate remarks by other people more experienced in such occasions. He takes a deep breath and begins—

"Mr President *and* Gentlemen,"—

Loud applause and remarks *ad lib.* from those round the head of the table, whose high standing in the mess entitles them to tell Mr President that they are gratified at the insight and knowledge of character which enabled Mr Tinietot to place him (Mr President) in a class apart from the remainder. This interval is employed by the speaker in draining his glass, and gaining a little Dutch courage. An expectant pause tells him that he once more has the audience with him,—

"Unaccustomed as I am to public speaking, I must," &c., Having trotted out the old stock phrases, he becomes personal, and from that it is a short step to being rude. Amidst the hubbub which ensues there comes the crash of the presidential hammer, and the voice of authority orders, "Dogs of War, out Mr Tinietot." The canine specimens referred to are the junior midshipmen. They growl fiercely and hurl themselves upon the gentleman, whom they bear kicking and struggling to the door. The door is opened, and a timely roll projects the whole lot in a heap into the flat outside. Thus ends our evening meal.

After this the mess starts to empty. We who have the middle watch must get some sleep first, for every minute of sleep at sea is precious. You never know but that a nice fat Hun will take this opportunity of coming out, and then there will be no sleep for you or for him either. Soon after 8 o'clock there is an influx of cold and hungry mortals, just down from keeping the last dog-watch, and quite ready for feeding time. On arrival they look like nothing on earth except, possibly, Russian drosky drivers. They are cylindrical in shape, except for a small knob at the top for the head and a split between the legs. When unwound from yards of muffler and from coats and waistcoats in large quantities, they resume their normal shapes. But for all this wrapping up watch-keeping is a

bitterly cold business, and it takes a good dinner to melt them. Then a pipe and to bed. By 9 P.M. the mess is clear.

"11.45, sir."

I open a sleepy eye, give a shudder of disgust, and close it again. What do I care if it is 11.45 or 31.45? What does he want to worry me for, the asterisk fool?

A vigorous shake is given to my hammock, and the same voice repeats, "11.45, sir."

Well, he seems to mean it anyway. I rouse myself a trifle, open both eyes, and find myself staring into the expectant face of a marine, the corporal of the watch. Then the awful truth strikes me. Of course, I have got the middle and put down for a call before I turned in.

"Orl ri'," I murmur, and away he goes doubled up to pass under the rows of hammocks. He has the greater part of a dozen more to call before he can be relieved and turn in.

I lie back and consider the situation. I know well enough that it isn't more than 10 o'clock. I only went to sleep a few minutes ago. Still, the fool has gone now, so there is no alternative but to take his word for it. With a groan I heave myself out of my hammock and proceed to my chest with such a head that I am hardly half awake. Here I proceed to wrap myself in a number of garments till I have grown to quite good proportions. Finally come the lammy coat and trousers, and I have become a walking or staggering cylinder.

By many painful struggles I drag myself up ladders and along decks to the gun-room, which I enter. The air is thick and nasty. No scuttles can be open at sea without making the North Sea an honorary member of the mess; no fire can be lighted, as the stovepipe on deck has been removed to save it from a watery grave, and in consequence the place is chilly; add to this a quantity of stale tobacco smoke and you get the mess aroma at sea at night. It is a most peculiar smell. By day it is cleared, as all junior midshipmen are sent to scuttle drill, which consists in opening the scuttles between waves and slamming them shut during the inundation periods.

In the mess are several of my companions in misfortune, likewise sufferers from the disease "fat head." Our remarks are few but to the point.

"Got the cocoa?"

"Yes; got the kettle?"

"Uh."

"Well, don't forget to fill it like last time."

Having collected my goods and chattels, I struggle on. My ultimate destination is the fore bridge, and the shortest way is *viâ* the upper deck, but there will be no upper deck for me to-night. It is too dark, and there is too much spray about. I make my way between decks, mostly in a folded-up position to avoid bumping the endless hammocks. Then up hatch after hatch. All of a sudden I emerge into the open air. The wind is no longer a hum but a roar. As I come up the ladder it catches me full in the chest and rams me down

again. I hang on tight, make a supreme effort, and reach the top, whereupon a smart lurch precipitates me at a run against another ladder. I have not reached my destination yet, for I am only on one of the lower bridges. I start to resume my climb, and just avoid being kicked in the face as I cannon into a down-coming form. This is no occasion for apologies, so feeling round to ensure that all my belongings are intact, I fight my way past and continue up. It is up, up, and ever up, cannoning into unseen people and hitting every part of my body against unseen obstacles. I am just wondering if the end will ever come, when I emerge on to the top bridge of all, and look round for my opposite number.

"Well," he remarks, "you're a d—d fine relief, aren't you? Here it is ten minutes past eight bells, and you just strolling up as though the ship belonged to you."

I know full well that it is only just striking twelve o'clock, but argument at this time of night is fruitless. After a remark or two to the effect that he has missed his vocation and ought to be professor of moans and lies to a dame's school, I take over the orders for the night, and he departs to bed. After all, it is not really his fault. It is disgustingly cold, and the only kettle which he and the other people of his watch had got, fused at the first attempt to boil water. Four hours without cocoa on a winter's night will take the ginger out of any one.

We settle down to our "ceaseless vigil," and after we have swallowed a mugful of the precious fluid, are fairly cheerful. And there we will leave the matter.

The show is over. For several days we have been at it, blown about, rained upon, and frequently snowed upon. The temperature has, as usual, been in the naughty noughts. The destroyers who have been with us have had a dog's life. Hardly once have they been steady. Continuous volleys of spray have swept the bridge and upper deck. Variations to this routine have taken the form of a green sea or two, which have washed the whole length of the upper deck, taking with them any movable object.

The sight is a fine one, when seen from a battleship's bridge, where at least one is dry. You can see a boat emerge from a cloud of spray and come half out of the water till her bottom is visible from the bows to abreast the foremost funnel. She pauses a moment in this position, and then her bows drop with a thud which you can almost feel. A cloud of spray springs up from her bows as high as the foremast, whilst clouds of spray and vigorous churning come from her stern as the propellers come close to the surface. The spray-fountain falls in a cloud all over the boat until she is literally lost to sight. Then she emerges and repeats her antics. Many of us thank our lucky stars that we are not in destroyers; but still, it is the aim of every right-minded Sub

to be sent to one. After all, does one not get extra pay, a truly handsome sum, for enduring this sort of thing!

Not a sign has been seen of our friend the Hun. No doubt Fritz is taking Gretchen to the "pictures," and laughing like a fool at the thought of the cursed English leading a dog's life at sea. That is where the Hun has the pull over us. Directly he thinks of going to sea, be it for ever so innocent a purpose, out we trot to put the stopper on him. He has very few miles of tether if he wants to get home in time, but we have miles to get to him and miles to go back. Truly the command of the sea is a great thing, but, yea verily, it brings plenty of work in its train.

But now we are going back. The midshipman of the forenoon watch, who is almost as great an authority on these matters as Wolff's Bureau on the war, has said so. He heard the captain challenge the navigator to a game of golf on the morrow, the loser to pay for tea and drinks. Could anybody doubt the fact of our return after such conclusive evidence?

In this case he proves no false prophet, for next morning, as it gets light, we see a far-away object, which at first sight looks like a cloud, but turns out to be something more solid—the top of a hill. Some hours later we are gliding between low-lying islands into the harbour from which we started. On the decks, where a few hours ago you couldn't walk ten yards without being drenched with spray, the sailors are preparing for harbour. Hatches are being opened up, and God's fresh air admitted to the places where we have been existing on air of the ultra-potted variety. From the steamboats' funnels a gentle haze of smoke is rising, and the derrick is being cleared away to hoist them out. Forward on the forecastle, sea-booted people are clearing away the anchors and cables.

On the bridge the scene is busiest. The usual crowd of brass hats have assembled for the important business of anchoring the ship. When we anchor as a fleet in long lines, we cannot just drop our hook[1] where we think fit, and trust to luck that when we swing to the tide we shall clear our neighbours and not swing into them. We must drop our killick[1] in a certain specified billet which a nice kind harbour-master has found to suit us, and, if we fail to fetch up in that billet, we must suffer the ignominy of once more getting under way and trying again. Hence the care-worn expression on the navigator's face and the numerous orders which issue from his lips. A ship of our class takes a great deal of stopping when once she is on the move. We have to stop engines and drift for half a mile before it is safe to let go an anchor, without running out all the cable, parting it, and losing the whole concern. It therefore requires a bit of

[1] Hook, killick = anchor.

juggling with the helm to allow for currents and cross-winds during that drift.

Eventually the navigator takes a bearing, and says to the captain, "Stand by, sir." The captain holds up a flag as a signal to the first lieutenant on the forecastle. There is an expectant pause. The navigator hangs over the compass and watches the card with eagle eye. Every one else present holds his breath and prays for success. For two minutes the strain is maintained. Not a word is spoken. Then, "Let go, sir." The flag drops, there is a splash, and then a roar as the cable runs out. The engines are put astern, and the ship is finally brought to a standstill. The navigator takes some bearings, and reports to the captain, "Ship in position, sir."

"Very good," replies the captain; "secure cable. Finished with main engines."

Once more we are home.

The first thing to do, of course, is to replenish with fuel. If we take a telescope and look carefully at the sailors who are running about the deck of our next-door neighbour we shall see an unexpected sight. Instead of the usual blue- or white-clad crowd we shall see individuals clad in every imaginable rig — people in football jerseys, khaki shirts, old overalls, &c. The reason lies in the collier which is hovering astern waiting for the signal to come alongside. These people who have been keeping arduous watches for days past have now, without any rest, to turn to and take in about a thousand tons of coal. There is no taking one's time about the matter either. Coaling in the navy is invariably an evolution, and the fleet must be fueled and ready for sea again in the shortest possible time. In such a manner is the war brought home to many of us. Still, to prevent the added discomfort of spoiling our uniforms, coal ship rig for the sailor consists of any old clothes he can scrape together. Officers must wear uniform of sorts, though only the very oldest.

I said that in this manner the war was brought home to *some* of us. We in the *Penultimate* carry coal only for "culinary purposes." We carry out our fueling in a far more cleanly manner. A stoker in a coal-burning ship was heard to sum it up to a friend in our ship as follows: "You rigs a ruddy 'ose, gets the ole pump 'eavin' round, and then gets your 'ead down and 'as a caulk." That stoker had a moan on the subject, but he was very near the truth.

Half an hour after the hook was dropped no one would think that we had been to sea for months. The boat booms are out, and the picket-boats are lying quietly at them. An officer of the watch is thoughtfully pacing the quarter-deck with a telescope under his arm. The only sealike scene is inside, where we are all devouring the mail which has accumulated in our absence.

(To be continued.)

MUSINGS WITHOUT METHOD

THE ARMISTICE—THE SACRIFICE OF YOUTH—ENGLISH AND ATHENIAN—AT OUR ZENITH—GERMANY IN THE PIT—WOMEN IN PARLIAMENT—MR ASQUITH'S HUMILITY—THE HALF-BAKED ORATORS OF THE LABOUR PARTY.

SIR DOUGLAS HAIG'S last despatch has a simple eloquence which will be for ever memorable. It is dated November 10, 10.19 A.M. "Shortly before dawn this morning"—thus it runs—"Canadian troops of the First Army (General Horne) captured Mons." Three-quarters of an hour afterwards the last shots were fired, and the armistice began. Was there ever a more tensely dramatic end to a great war? We cannot forget what Mons meant to us four years ago, and we feel proud in the thought that the blood shed then and now avenged was not shed in vain. Our victory is complete. Germany lies at the feet of the Allies, crushed and impotent. Had she been a fair foe we might spare for her a tear of pity. She was a foul fighter always, and our strongest emotion is that the world is rid of a monster.

The terms of the armistice are harsh with the harshness of justice. We are resolved that the Germans shall trouble our peace no longer. Not only shall all the invaded countries—including Alsace-Lorraine—be evacuated, but the countries on the left bank of the Rhine shall come under the control of the Allies and the United States of America. A vast number of guns and aeroplanes are surrendered, together with all the submarines which have served the Germans in their campaign of piracy. But it is needless to enumerate the terms which we have compelled the enemy to accept. They are by this time familiar to us all. There is one condition which cannot be repeated too often, and which will never be effaced from our minds. "The German command," thus concludes Article VIII., "shall reveal all destructive measures that may have been taken (such as poisoning or pollution of wells, springs, &c.) under penalty of reprisals." Has it ever before been found necessary to impose so grossly insulting a condition upon any foe who dared to call himself civilised?

The news that peace was in sight found us strangely unprepared. As four years ago our entrance into the war seized us with a just surprise, so the end of hostilities found us puzzled. "I am astonished that a single soul survives a battle," once said that gallant soldier, the Prince de Ligne. "How shall you not die of grief if you lose, or of joy if you win?" We have fought a battle of unparalleled length and ferocity. It has lasted without cessation from August

1914 to November 1918, and has engaged more men and used more machinery than ever were engaged or used in the history of the world. And we did not die of joy. Our first emotion was an emotion of solemnity. The relief and the thankfulness which obsessed us were nearer to tears than to laughter. The shouts in the street, the natural expression of the popular happiness, seemed strangely inapposite until our ears were accustomed to them. The war was fought with too grave an object, it exacted too great a sacrifice to be expressed in terms of hilarity. And then suddenly it came upon us that the shouters were in the right of it. After a long hour of tension all that is human within us demands relief. We return to the normal with a cheer. After the murder of Duncan in "Macbeth" there was heard the knocking at the door, and then followed the ribaldry of the porter about those who went by the primrose path to the everlasting bonfire.

And now that the relief is here, we know that we shall come back to a world which we did not know before. Our freedom and happiness have been saved by the young, who will not enjoy them. They have won the fight, and they have paid for the victory with their blood. "None of these men were enervated by wealth or hesitated to resign the pleasures of life; none of them put off the evil day in the hope, natural to poverty, that a man, though poor, may one day become rich. But, deeming that the punishment of their enemies was sweeter than any of those things—that they could fall in no nobler cause—they determined at the hazard of their lives to be honourably avenged, and to leave the rest. They resigned to hope their unknown chance of happiness; but in the face of death they resolved to rely upon themselves alone. And when the moment came they were minded to resist and suffer rather than to fly and save their lives; they ran away from the word of dishonour, but on the battlefield their feet stood fast, and in an instant, at the height of their fortune, they passed away from the scene, not of their fear, but of their glory." Thus spake Pericles of the Athenian dead, and we may echo his brave words with pride and sincerity.

The youth has saved the country, and our joy in their supreme achievement is tempered by the knowledge that many of those men, worthy sons of England, will return home no more. Yet they died not in vain, nor without their due reward. They have received the meed of praise and the noblest sepulchre, in which their glory and the gratitude of their country survive. "For," said Pericles, "the whole earth is the sepulchre of famous men; not only are they commemorated by columns and inscriptions in their own country, but in foreign lands there dwells also an unwritten memorial of them, graven not

in stone, but in the hearts of men." Nevertheless, let us remember, in giving them the poor reward of unforgetfulness, that they died without thought of meed or glory. It was enough for them that England was in danger, that the homeland was threatened with death and slavery, and they came willingly from every corner of the Empire to make their sacrifice.

And what an achievement has been theirs! With the help of our brave Allies they have broken the power of the worst despot who ever aimed at the dominion of the world. The men of our Empire have fought in the East and the West, in France and Macedonia, in Mesopotamia and Palestine, and everywhere victory has crowned their arms. Even the glorious defeat at Gallipoli has been avenged by our triumph over the Turks. It was a favourite superstition of the Germans before the war that Great Britain was sunk in sloth, and had no other thought than of money-making. And we have proved that our ancient energy is unimpaired, rather is enhanced. We have created armies where no armies were; we have learned the craft of fight as we went on. We called vast factories into being, and produced by our own effort enough munitions of war to defeat a nation which had cherished the ambition of destroying the world for half a century. Nor shall we ever forget the splendid vigilance of our Fleet, which made victory certain from the first, and which, still unhampered by the pernicious doctrine of the freedom of the seas, saved Europe now as it saved Europe a hundred years ago.

Thus we stand at the zenith of our power; thus by our endeavour and example we have aided our Allies in the task of preserving the liberty of the world. We have won, because neither at home nor in the field have we admitted the possibility of defeat. We have never doubted. Even in the dark days of disaster—and we have known many dark days—we were still confident of the ultimate victory; and since wars are decided, as Marshal Foch, whose leadership ensured the triumph of the Allies, has argued, by moral as well as by material force, our resolution has not been without its effect upon the enemy. And if the Allies to-day are at the summit, into how deep a pit has Germany fallen! Her fall appals her the more grimly, because for four years she has lived upon boastfulness. No nation ever vaunted herself as loudly as did Germany. To look back upon the speeches which her Kaiser made, upon the manifestoes which her professors and preachers and politicians have published, is to plumb the abyss in which she lies prostrate. They outdid one another in schemes of aggrandisement. This one was determined at all hazards never to let go of Belgium. That one had made up his mind to lay violent hands upon the channel ports of France. Another, yet bolder, drew a rough

line from the German frontier to Toulon, and exclaimed, all that shall be mine. And all were resolved never to surrender Longwy and Briey—not that they had any right to them, but because they contained such mineral wealth as might be of use to Germany. And now the dream is over. The whole Rhineland is in process of being evacuated, and Mayence, Coblentz, and Cologne will within a few days be garrisoned by the Allies.

Unhappily there is still a fly in our ointment. The politicians once more fell below the height of their opportunity. In accepting the German demand for an armistice they declared, without cause or warrant, that a conference would presently arrange terms upon the basis of President Wilson's fourteen points. Why these points were introduced irrelevantly we know as little as we know what they mean. But, indeed, there are not a few misunderstandings which the meeting at Versailles seems to justify. Why, for instance, was Lord Reading in attendance upon the Prime Minister? Lord Reading is Lord Chief Justice of England, and he is British Ambassador at Washington. For neither of these activities is Versailles the proper place. Why, then, was he there? He is not a representative of the British people, from which he is alien in blood. He is not trusted by the British people, and it is unfortunate that, at the moment of the victory of the Allies, he should be intruded into our councils. But a far more dangerous intrusion than that of Lord Reading is the intrusion of the fourteen points. Now the making of a peace after a great war is the most solemn duty that statesmen are ever asked to discharge. Upon their wisdom and courage depend the destinies of the world. They should approach the task in a spirit of humility. It is not their business to think of politics or politicians. As they ought not to shrink from the ruthless punishment of their blood-stained foe, so they should not scruple, if need be, firmly and courteously to oppose a friend. It seems as though our Ministers could not divest themselves of their customary levity even at this solemn moment. They mentioned in the same document the armistice and President Wilson's fourteen points. Only one reason could possibly justify the introduction of the fourteen points: that they are in themselves the wisest and best terms which the united prudence and understanding of the Allies could devise. Does M. Clemenceau believe this, or Mr Lloyd George? We think not, and the conclusion is forced upon us that the fourteen points were established as a basis for the discussion of peace merely to save the face of President Wilson.

We may go further than this, and assert that the majority of President Wilson's own countrymen have very little respect for the fourteen

points. If the result of the American elections means anything, it means that President Wilson's platitudes are not acceptable to the most of his countrymen. Indeed, he has relieved us of all doubt by explaining them away himself in the presence of the polling-booth. He has told his countrymen that he does not want a compromise peace, and yet compromise is the essence of the notorious fourteen. He assures us that his points were not "political commandments not to be discussed by the Allies but only obeyed." And for this condescension we owe him our profound thanks. Again, there was a suspicion aroused during the elections that President Wilson's League of Nations meant the denial of the principle of nationalism. This suspicion also is said to be allayed, and though the reasonable doubts of the electors cost the President a loss of support both in Congress and in the Senate, he himself may be thought to have made a proper recantation.

The fourteen points, then, are clearly not the last words of wisdom, and it can be regretted only that they were ever mentioned at all. The Allies in Europe have borne the brunt of the fighting; they have made the heaviest sacrifices; they have suffered most deeply from the brutality and the infamy of the Germans. It is for them, therefore, to take the lead in formulating the terms of a peace satisfactory to them. And President Wilson would have shown a clearer appreciation of the facts of the case had he been content to follow the Allies rather than to lead them. Of the most dangerous of the points, that which concerned the Freedom of the Seas, we shall hear no more. That is happily expunged, and the safety of England will not be handed over, a free gift, to conquered Germany. But of those which remain several are designed to darken counsel. So dimly nebulous are they that their discussion might keep a mob of smart attorneys busy for twenty years. The third point, for instance, informs us that all economic barriers are to be removed as far as possible. But why should the Allied nations fling their fiscal systems down upon the conference table for anybody to hack at? What does this point mean, if it does not mean free trade all round? And President Wilson was persuaded by the public opinion of his own country to assert that free trade was not in his thoughts. What was in his thoughts we shall never know. We do know that this indecision in a document intended for universal acceptance is nothing less than deplorable.

Then at last comes the League of Nations, which its champions believe, in their ignorance and simplicity, to be a cry of enlightenment. It is merely a parrot-like repetition of the folly which has been talked after every great war. The Holy Alliance, established at Aix-la-Chapelle,

whose object was to make the world safe for autocracy, was merely the League of Nations with another name. In 1815 Europe had suffered from the attempted domination of Napoleon, who was cunning enough to call himself a democrat. To-day the disturber of the peace, William II., was once an autocrat, and so, mimicking the voice of Alexander of Russia, we demand, foolishly, the converse, that the world shall be made safe from autocracy. The League of Nations will come to nothing, as all leagues fail, which are but veiled tyrannies. To put the Sermon on the Mount upon all statute-books would be an admirable enterprise, if all governments were honest and virtuous. But governments, as we know them, are seldom virtuous and never honest, and, if England accepted the League of Nations, she would expose her throat to the assassin's knife. Our very strength is a source of danger to us, and if once we consented to diminish our fleet to the limits of a police force, there would be an end of us. This, indeed, is the test of our wisdom and sincerity. Let every man who murmurs sentimentalities about the League of Nations, as Sir Edward Carson said the other day, ask himself whether he is prepared to suppress the British Fleet. If we are prepared to do this, there is an end of the matter. Only, do not let us hide the truth from our eyes. The League of Free Nations will be a League of Enslaved Peoples, and it will not be Great Britain who will wield the lash.

If the world ever substitutes co-operation for competition in arms and industry, the change will come not from a pompous conference but from a universal change of heart. Our hearts are not changed, and if we are not insane we shall continue to defend ourselves against the aggression of our enemies. We may acknowledge the amiable and dangerous principles which underlie the League of Nations without subscribing to them. "The benign principles of the Alliance of the 26th of September 1815," said Castlereagh, "may be considered as constituting the European system in matter of political conscience. It would, however, be derogatory to this solemn act of the sovereigns to mix its discussion with the ordinary diplomatic obligations which bind State to State, and which are to be looked for alone in the treaties which have been concluded in the accustomed form." There, in a few lines, is our reply to those States who invite us to come into their league, and let us hope that the irony will not escape them.

And if the fourteen points are unacceptable to us, they are repugnant also to our Dominions, who have fought at our side since the beginning of the war, and who, next after our European Allies, are entitled to enforce their views at the Conference of Peace. Mr Hughes, the Prime Minister of Australia, lost no time in making an effective protest. He has pointed out that Clause 3

says the economic treatment to be given to France, Belgium, Italy, and America must also be extended to Germany. "Nothing but *force majeure* would compel Australia to do that." No high-spirited country, no loyal Dominion, will permit any interference with the right to make such laws or such fiscal arrangements as it deems proper. We did not go into this war to put a halter round our necks. We have not faced the cruelty and bestiality of the Germans for four years merely to take their hand in friendship, and to admit them into our markets with open arms. President Wilson's desire to let off Germany as lightly as possible receives no encouragement on this side of the Atlantic. We recognise that he cannot see the truth as clearly as it is presented to our eyes. The country over which he presides has not suffered very much from the German policy of brutality. No young girls in America have known the cruel fate of those unhappy creatures who were stolen from Lille and thrown to the wild beasts in the German trenches. The thought of this one deed should harden our hearts for ever against the brutes who could think of it and order it; and we have complete confidence that neither England nor France will ever enter a league which admits to its privileges the monsters who, since 1914, have been fighting Germany's battle in Europe.

After all, indignation and a sense of justice are still alive and awake. Glittering generalities will not dazzle the eyes of Europe. We demand punishment as well as reparation and indemnity, and we mean to get them—all three. But our politicians do not want to argue. They are happiest when they find a line of conduct which seems to make resistance unnecessary. Nor do we see much chance that they will strengthen their opposition to the views of hysteria. We must, therefore, rely upon the spirit of the British nation, which in peace as in war is stronger and wiser than the spirit of the politicians. The British nation has won the war in spite of Mr Asquith and the futile opponents of conscription. It will win the peace in spite of those who scream about a League of Nations, which they do not understand.

Indeed, we have not much cause to be grateful to our politicians. The wisest of them, it is true, were resolved upon victory, but let it be remembered that they were strengthened in their resolution by all the best of our citizens. All of them, good and bad alike, have conspired to make a superfluous revolution while the war was in progress. The House of Commons has renewed its existence, for six months at a time, for the excellent reason that we did not wish the distraction of a general election in the midst of a war. The House of Commons has made this renewal an excuse for passing measures which it was not empowered

to pass by those who elected it. The Franchise Bill and the Bill which admits women into Parliament are betrayals and nothing else. As far as we know they were not demanded by the country. No election had justified their passage. A House kept in being to fight Germany has used the trust reposed in it to upset our decent Constitution. We believe that a majority in the House was opposed to the Franchise Bill. We know that a majority of the House, had it been left free to record its own opinion, would have voted against the admission of women to Parliament. But it was not left to itself. By a sort of blackmail it was forced to support a Coalition, which was determined to force through such measures as the most of the members of Parliament deplored. And it has come to this, that a majority of the House thought one way and voted another, and thus has forfeited its right to the title of "honourable" carelessly flung across the House.

It is gradually dawning upon our politicians that they are not respected. They need not pretend surprise. A man who solemnly records an opinion, which in his heart he does not hold, does not deserve and rarely obtains honour or respect. When opportunism is the prevailing doctrine, you can look for nothing better than an organised cunning. To take one example: the new Franchise Bill, passed by an obedient, unconvinced House, gave the vote to a vast mob of women. When the women were agitating for the vote by means which should have excluded them for ever from meddling with the government of the country, they proclaimed aloud that the vote would satisfy them. They had no desire to sit in Parliament, oh dear, no! The vote was the thing, and they asked no other privilege. Before they had ever confronted a ballot-box, they demanded the right to sit in the House, and the tame members, fearing that if they did not acquiesce they might lose some votes at the next election, gave an eager and silent assent. Everything, then, is possible. The Coalition proposes this or that measure independently of the House or of the country, and finds an instant support from the well-drilled mob which is supposed to represent the free and independent electors.

The Coalition has transformed our Constitution without any scruple of conscience, without a "mandate," and without asking the poor silly sheep of an elector what he thought about it. The Coalition, moreover, absorbing into itself all members of the House who do not belong to the Labour Party, will henceforth do whatever it likes. Even Mr Asquith, that veteran leader of the lower middle-class, professes now to be the ardent supporter of Mr Lloyd George. Thus he submits to the necessity of the moment, and we need not take his profession very seriously. There is scarcely a single opinion which he has not held and dropped since the

beginning of the war. He took upon himself the credit of the Paris resolutions, and presently came forward as the outspoken champion of the old-fashioned Free Trade. He sat by the fireside of the Liberal Party and mumbled about his old faiths, as though they meant something to him or to anybody else. "Take next Free Trade," said he, to an accompaniment of cheers. "Here Liberalism, through its authentic representatives, speaks with no uncertain sound." No uncertain sound, indeed! This echo of the political gramophone can be interpreted only with irony. You can't speak with "no uncertain sound" both of the Paris resolutions and of Free Trade. The sound of such words as these trembles with uncertainty. The voice is always the voice of Mr Asquith; the sound varies according to the occasion. The begetter of the Paris resolutions now finds it opportune to deplore the economic boycott. One section of his party is itching to get to work again with the Germans. It longs to welcome the Hun, who stole French women and flogged English prisoners of war, back to its counting-house. And here is Mr Asquith, in forgetfulness of brave words spoken a year or two ago, eloquent in support of Germany's friends. "Let us know definitely and clearly," says he, "who is for us and who is against us. Otherwise I warn you quite frankly, and particularly the new electors who for the first time are taking their place on the roll, you will be hoodwinked, and before you are many years old you will find yourselves involved in the old morass of protective duties with all its disastrous consequences." Poor new electors, who never heard of the Paris resolutions! Whichever side they take in their innocence of heart, they will find themselves hoodwinked by one or other of the many Mr Asquiths, who have endeavoured, with this view or that, to claim their support.

When Mr Asquith gets among his friends he is frank in his self-satisfaction. He still pretends to believe that the Bill for the Self-Government of Ireland, "for which, as you will remember, we Liberals have fought for more than the lifetime of a generation, and which in principle we have already placed upon the Statute-book," is indispensable for the happiness of Ireland. He dares still to pride himself upon having clipped the wings of the House of Lords, and is clever enough to say not a word to those who are blessed with short memories about the debt of honour which he has made no attempt to pay. What has the great Liberal Party got to do with debts of honour? A far sterner purpose lies ahead of it—to get back into office by hook or by crook; and with Mr Lloyd George's cast-iron, invincible Coalition in front of it, it must know that success in the House of Commons is impossible for it. In the last four years the world has

changed for England, and Mr Asquith knows it not. He believes, with a touching simplicity, that we are still busied with the problems which before the war aroused his well-drilled audiences to enthusiasm, and that he has only to mention Free Trade or the House of Lords to evoke an immediate response. Poor man! We are almost disposed to be sorry for him. If he wastes too much time in the thankless task of flogging dead horses he will be too late for the poll.

At last he begins to fear for his own position. Messrs McKenna and Runciman may be staunch in loyalty, or they may not be. In any case, they are not enough to make a party. And Mr Samuel—is he a tower of strength in a British Parliament? Mr Asquith, then, having spoken with the old familiar voice at Glasgow, suddenly made the astounding confession that he was in complete agreement with Mr Lloyd George. Is he, we wonder? Mr Lloyd George, a chameleon, has been able to assume all the colours. Mr Asquith is not so easy a reflector as Mr Lloyd George, and when he tells us that "he could add nothing nor withdraw anything from the Prime Minister's speech," you perceive clearly enough what a juggle is politics, and you are persuaded that it matters very little what Mr Asquith thinks or does not think.

Mr Lloyd George's cast-iron Coalition has but one opponent—the Labour Party. The single merit of the Coalition is that it will hold the Labour Party in check, and if that Party be not held in check it is all over with the Empire. The last meeting of the Party proves how dangerous a combination is malice and ignorance. Many of the Labour men are malicious; all are ignorant. And their capacity for evil is enormously increased by the support given to them by Messrs Webb and Shaw. These two gentlemen, members, both of them, of the hated *bourgeoisie*, are wreckers and no more. The fact that Mr Henderson accepts them as his colleagues shows that Mr Henderson lacks sincerity. Mr Shaw was kind enough to tell the Party that he was a much cleverer man than Mr Henderson. He may be, or he may not be. About this delicate question we hold no opinion. We do know that Mr Shaw, boasting that he pays supertax upon his income, has no sort of right to belong to the Labour Party. But he had simple men to deal with, and he was right, no doubt, when he thought that his damp squibs in that kind of company would appear like real fireworks. However, his namesake, Mr Shaw, of the Textile Workers, a far saner, better man than he, said the last word of the braggart writer of plays. "If Mr Bernard Shaw," said he, "were ten times as clever as he thinks he is, an utterly impossible thing, I would still say that this is one of the vilest insinuations that ever a man uttered"—the insinuation

being that Mr Barnes is a blackleg.

Messrs Webb and B. Shaw are dangerous men. Perhaps they are less dangerous within the Labour Party than they might be without it. They arouse evil suspicions and they darken counsel. When all was said and done, the upshot of the Labour Conference was that their sacred members, who are said to engross the wisdom of all the ages, refuse to have anything to do with the government of the British Empire. Their elegant reply to the Coalition is that there is "nothing doing." On the other hand, they demand to be represented at the Peace Conference. And they are so stupid that they cannot see the anomaly. If they refuse to their members the right of belonging to the British Cabinet, how shall they claim for themselves the right of interfering with the terms of peace? Of course the inference which they would have us draw is that they alone are fit to cure the evils of Europe. And the truth is that they could not be trusted to keep a Board of Guardians in order.

And many of them are Bolshevists, pure and simple. The fate of Russia teaches them nothing. They still dream of murder. One orator pleaded for howitzers; another declared that the Bolshevists in Russia had put up a finer fight for Labour than had ever been put up in any country in the world. Mr Ramsay Macdonald bleated after his wont, and Mr Henderson, who is reputed to be less clever than the mountebank Mr Shaw, was good enough to say that "the world must be reconstructed on the basis of human brotherhood." How little understanding he has of politics or of history. "Why should we not plead," he asked, "for a defeated enemy? We must think with an international mind." An international mind is no mind at all, and if Mr Henderson pleaded successfully for a defeated Germany, Germany would never know the pains of defeat. The truth is, the Labour Party consists chiefly of fluent, half-baked, foolish persons, who are ready, from mere vanity, to destroy the world. And their ignorance and volubility are the best argument in support of the Coalition, which will certainly be tyrannical, but which may save us from the terrors of Bolshevism.

INDEX TO VOL. CCIV.

ADMINISTRATIVE CONTROL, NOT UNDER FULL, 194.

AIR, CHANGE OF, 178.

AMERICAN TROOP CONVOY, WITH THE, 354.

AMONG MAHOMMEDANS IN THE PUNJAB, 486.

BAGHDAD - KERMANSHAH ROAD, THE OLD, 307. Jebel Hamrin foothills, *ib. et seq.*—on the road to Persia, 310—Persian watch-towers, 311—desolation everywhere, *ib. et seq.*—the Taq-i-Garra pass, 313 *et seq.*—snow in the pass, 315—in Jebel Hamrin, 316—relief work started on the road, 318—plague and misery caused by the Hun manifest, 320.

BENCH AND BAR OF ENGLAND, THE, 598. I., Judges and Judges, *ib.*—II., Judges and Counsel, 602—III., Counsel and Clients, 606—IV., Counsel and Witnesses, 731—V., Counsel and Speeches, 738—VI., Counsel and Students, 744.

'BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE,' HALF LITT *v.*, An Ancient Controversy, 388.

Bolsheviks, the crimes of the, 410.

BOMBING STUNT, AND AFTERWARDS, A, 526.

CHANGE OF AIR, 178. Paying guest on a tramp steamer, *ib.*—at Labrador, 180—its primitive inhabitants, 182—a great salmon country, 184—a fishing expedition, *ib. et seq.*—at Base Camp, 189—return to England, 193.

CLOUDS, THE MAN FROM THE: Part I.—VII., At the Mansion-house, 47—VIII., Sunday, 50—IX., An Ally, 54—X., The Coast Patrol, 57—XI., A Near Thing, 203—XII., The Key Turned, 208—XIII., On the Drifter, 210—XIV., My Cousin's Letter, 215. Part II.—I., An Idea, 219—II., A Little Dinner, 224—III., The Alcoholic Patient, 323—IV., The Test, 327—V., Waiting, 331—VI., The Spectacled Man, 335—VII., A Reminiscence, 339—VIII., H.M.S. *Uruguay*, 343—IX., Bolton on the Track, 346—X., Where the Clue led, 350—XI., An Eye-opener, 455—XII., The Confidant, 457—XIII., Jean's guesses, 461—XIV., The Pocket-book, 464—XV., Part of the Truth, 469—XVI., Tracked down, 472—XVII., The rest of the Truth, 476—XVIII., The Frosty Road, 481—XIX., Our Morning Call, 484.

Collins, Mr Clifton, an old contributor to 'Maga,' death of, 696.

COLT, THE UNKNOWN: A Story of the Galway Plate, 502.

Education Bill, Mr Herbert Fisher's, 137—the future of the "young person," 139—military drill, 140—the real aim of the Board of Education, 141.

'Eminent Victorians,' Mr Lytton Strachey's, notice of, 274.

ESCAPED: ADVENTURES IN GERMAN CAPTIVITY, 110. III. Engaged on new plans, *ib. et seq.*—rehearsals with confederates, 114—succeed at last, and cut adrift with companion, 117—mistake of trusting an accomplice too much adds to our difficulties, 119—leave Berlin and ultimately reach Haltern, 121 *et seq.*—break down, and return to Haltern to be arrested again, 124 *et seq.* IV. In the village lock-up, 252—back to Berlin, 254—solitary confinement, 255—second Christmas in prison, 257—arrival in Ruhleben near end of September, 261—efforts to escape from the camp, 264. V. Escape again from camp, 282—in Berlin, 284 *et seq.*—I meet a friend, 292—trouble with railway ticket, 296 *et seq.*—some strange vicissitudes, 299—freedom at last, 306.

EXPERIENCES OF A WAR BABY, 815. I., Nursery Days, *ib.*—II., Home and its Occupants, 818—III., At Sea, 823.

FESTIVAL, 761.

FORGOTTEN CAPITAL OF THE NEAR EAST, A, 582—Peculiar charm of the Latin East, *ib.*—Gothic architecture, 585—S. Sophia, 586—bazaars of Nicosia, 587—Kiamil Pasha, 590—policy of the Orthodox Church in Turkey, 593—a village of washerwomen, 596.

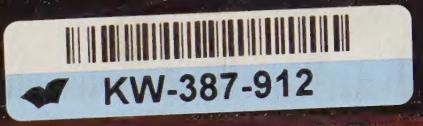
FOR WOMEN—A chapter of unspeakable German atrocities, 697.

FRANCE, A HOSPITAL IN, 613.

Freedom of the Seas, the, 688.
French Renaissance, The, 100.
German Raider "Wolf," Five Months with the, 1.
Germany, the evil deeds of, 540—what we must exact from, 541 *et seq.*—South-West Africa, the story of, 545.
Gott Mit Uns, 771.
"Green Balls": I., The Dawn Patrol, 752.
Hazlitt *v.* 'Blackwood's Magazine': An Ancient Controversy, 388.
Hickey, Memoirs of William, notice of, 142 *et seq.*
H.M.S. ——: XXIX., Grit, 235—XXX., A Maxim, 239—XXXI., From a far Country, *ib.*—XXXII., The Crisis, 242—XXXIII., A Sea Chanty, 243—XXXIV., Retribution, *ib.*—XXXV., Through an Admiralty Window, 399—XXXVI., A Most Untrue Story, 404.
Hospital in France, A, 613.
Indian Constitutional Reform, Mr Montagu and, 413.
Involuntary Visit, An: Three Days with the Turks in Mesopotamia, 74.
Ireland, 788. The Irish Convention and its recommendations, *ib.* — the Nationalists' demands, 789 — Unionists' peculiar position, *ib.* — Ireland not two nations, but one, 790—Mr Devlin's demand, *ib.* — contribution towards Imperial services, 791—Britain's contribution to Ireland, 792—the Ulster difficulty, *ib.*
Ireland the Mrs Gummidge of the Empire, 131 — the Rebellion, 133 — irresolution of the Government, 135—Ireland's true grievance, 136.
Italian Front, A Mobile X-Ray Section on the, 145. First evening in the Zone of War, 146—an adventurous trip to Milan for new plates, 147 *et seq.*—under shell fire, 153—a tribute to the Italian soldier, 154—interesting cases, 155 *et seq.*—developing plates, 158 *et seq.*—Italian discipline, 161—visit to Gorizia, 163—interesting journeys, 165 *et seq.* — a tunnel hospital, 168—viewing assault of San Marco, 172—recommended for "Medal of Valore," 176.
League of Nations, Viscount Grey and the, 266 *et seq.*, 693, 836.
Mahommedans in the Punjab, Among, 486.
Mond, Sir Alfred Moritz, and a monument to the fallen, 548—lineage of, 549.
Musings without Method: *July*, 131—*August*, 266—*September*, 408—*October*, 539—*November*, 687—*December*, 832.
Not under full Administrative Control, 194.
Old Baghdad - Kermanshah Road, The, 307.
On Patrol.—VII., A Battle-Prayer (Submarines — The Battle-Fleet—Destroyers), 45. VIII., An Administrative Victory, 535.
On the Wall, 374.
Pacifist, A Seventeenth-Century, 358.
Pushed, 421, 553.
Ralegh, Sir Walter, 670. Birth of, *ib.* — a commoner at Oxford, *ib.*—voyage of discovery, 671—fortunate meeting with Queen Elizabeth, 672—in the battle against Spain, 674—loss of favour at Court, 675—a true poet and man of letters, 676—sent to the Tower, 677—released, *ib.*—enterprise to find the North-West Passage, 680—voyage to Guiana, 682—tried and condemned to death, 684—wrote his 'History of the World' in the Tower, 685 — beheaded in the Old Palace Yard, 686.
Renaissance, The French, 100.
Return Push, The, 794.
Salvage, 495.
S.G.—Station Guides, 229.
Test, The, 641.
Tsar, the murder of the, 408.
Unknown Colt, The: A Story of the Galway Plate, 502.
"Usque ab Ovo," 63.
Visit, An Involuntary: Three Days with the Turks in Mesopotamia, 74.
Wall, On the, 374.
War Office in War Time, The, 775.
Water-Rats, The, 29.
With the American Troop Convoy, 354.
"Wolf," Five Months with the German Raider, 1. Life on the *Wolf*, and capture of the coal-laden *Igotz Mendi*, *ib. et seq.*—transferred to the captured vessel, 5—the dismal farce of Christmas, 11—coaling the *Wolf* from the *Igotz Mendi*, 12—uncertainty of prisoners' destination while proceeding northwards, 16—in condition of great misery enter the Arctic circle, 18—intention to intern prisoners in Germany, 19—aground, 22—landed in Denmark, 25—arrive in London, 27.
X-Ray Section on the Italian Front, A Mobile, 145.

Printed by William Blackwood and Sons.

BOUND BY THE ANCIENT HOUSE
BINDERY, IPSWICH.


KW-387-912